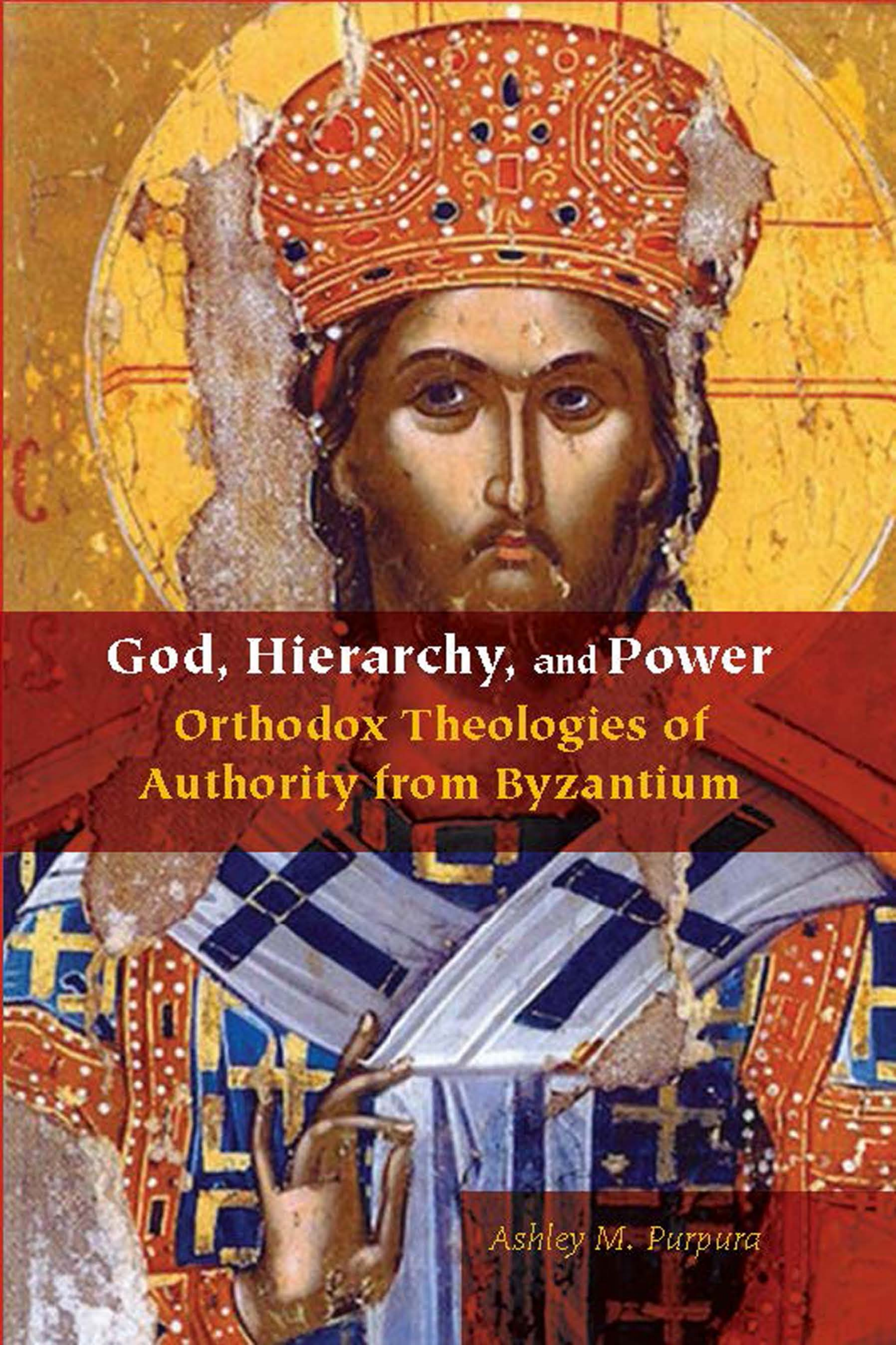


God, Hierarchy, and Power

Orthodox Theologies of Authority from Byzantium

Ashley M. Purpura

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ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY AND CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT

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Introduction: Challenge of Hierarchy for Orthodoxy

Eastern Orthodox Christianity from antiquity to the present is hierarchical. Orthodoxy has a fundamental ecclesiastical orientation toward hierarchy both in its administration and its sacramentality. The hierarchical model of stratified ecclesiastical ranks, orders, and offices is present in the earliest accounts of Christianity and develops expansively throughout the Byzantine period. From its liturgical and sacramental orientations to its patriarchal and ascetic organizations, the spiritual life of Orthodox Christians—both past and present—is powerfully shaped by historical and theological traditions of ecclesiastical hierarchy. What hierarchy is, how it is situated theologically, and why it persists, however, remain without clear consensus among both practitioners and scholars. Generally, when hierarchy is questioned in modern Orthodox theology, the seemingly vague concept of "tradition" is invoked to justify the order, exclusivity, ceremony, and authority of the ecclesiastical hierarchy (particularly in its ordained ranks), without clearly articulating why the tradition of the past needs to be maintained.[1] This is particularly problematic when it appears that some aspects of hierarchy contradict the values of universality and equality many Orthodox Christians claim to espouse.

For some, the term "hierarchy" has developed a negative association. It is often used to refer to stratified organizational structures based on subordination of the many to a superior few, and is associated with easily abused power dynamics within those structures. For this reason, some scholars of Christianity reject the term, saying it is no longer reflective of an authentic Christian ideal.[2] Others argue hierarchy was never a good

ecclesiastical model of organization and leadership in the first place, which presumes that hierarchy is a human creation that can (and should) take a more egalitarian form.[3] According to some, ecclesiastical hierarchy throughout time has obscured and twisted the supposedly simple and radically equalizing message of Jesus, and thus arguably taints all of Christian history.[4] Not only is hierarchy sometimes construed as oppressive and abusive, some have regarded it as an overly complicated and needless barrier standing in the ecclesiastical way between God and humanity.[5] There are indeed numerous cases in recent memory where domination, abuse, oppression, inequality, and suppression do manifest themselves among Christian leadership that give ample ground for these critiques.

Historically, Christian hierarchy suffered similar challenges and similar manifestations of disconnect between expressed religious ideals and religious administration.[6] The self-aggrandizement that comes with titles and positions is routinely cautioned against by early and medieval Christian authors, indicating a real historical concern for the purity of the hierarchy. Additionally, canonical developments evince that selling ecclesial offices and appointing one's friends and family members to ecclesiastical ranks was not uncommon in Orthodox Christian history.[7] Indeed if one looks to tradition, the pomp, vesture, and titles associated with ecclesiastical hierarchy are elaborately developed and maintained in various forms for over a millennium of Christianity. Although these features alone are not inherently problematic (and are actually justified by several theological and liturgical developments), for some they represent a visual manifestation of overly ritualistic and power-hungry clericalism.[8] The "problem" of hierarchy is not new at all, so the question of hierarchy's persistence needs to be informed from a historical perspective.

Beyond the general modern distaste for hierarchy in some Christian and secular communities, and pragmatic assessments of hierarchy as a tenuous but persistent administrative practice historically, there are three particularly prominent (and presently relevant) domains of challenges to hierarchy as a theological ideal specifically within the richly diverse Orthodox tradition: the inclusivity of hierarchy (essentially an issue in ecclesiology), the exclusivity of hierarchy, and lastly, the relation between power and hierarchy. Although these issues are not exhaustive of the challenges to hierarchy in contemporary Orthodoxy, they are representative of three significant domains of theological concern that challenge the existence and maintenance of hierarchy.

The first challenge of ecclesiological inclusivity is oriented by the contested issue of identifying the boundaries of authentic tradition. Specifically, identifying a community or individual as theologically sufficient for participating in communion with other communities, in the case of Orthodoxy, is traditionally determined by hierarchs and priests. Who has the authority to draw the lines of ecclesiology and community inclusivity is essentially a question of hierarchy. If the hierarchy is primarily conceived of in terms of the ordained clerical leadership, then a great deal of trust must be present between the community and its leaders to recognize the fullness of the church authentically, and to admit simultaneously the circumstances wherein the fullness of the church cannot be recognized. Ideally this decision should be based on theological evaluation, and not personal differences, power struggles, or territorial claims—however, these less spiritually focused differences have historically been the justification for schism or excommunication.[9] Likewise, even theological difference needs to be carefully evaluated for the degree of its divisiveness, and not be reinforced and amplified along lines of cultural misunderstanding or political aspirations. As the source of ecclesiological inclusivity, the ecclesiastical hierarchy is simultaneously divisive and uniting in the naming of tradition. This function of determining ecclesiastical boundaries lends "hierarchy" the potential to jeopardize the legitimacy and theological authority of tradition and the identities of those within it.[10] Consequently, reflecting on who and what constitutes legitimate ecclesiastical hierarchy prompts a rethinking of the ways in which ecclesiological boundaries and divisions are powerfully drawn and religious identities articulated.

A second aspect of this ecclesiological inclusivity is that of legitimization of one's own community and ecclesiological participation via the hierarchy. Orthodoxy includes an Ignatian patristic tradition in which the legitimacy and full expression of the Christian church is tied to the presence of the hierarch.[11] This poses potential challenges if the hierarch is known to be morally questionable or, more grievously, unorthodox—or just frequently absent. How then do believers situate themselves and identify themselves as authentically the Body of Christ independent of the ecclesiastical leadership? Or is this a theological impossibility? This dilemma extends to a type of Donatist tension, wherein the faith in the ecclesial gathering and what it sacramentally accomplishes is called into question based on the personal integrity of the ecclesiastical minister. This tension is never fully resolved in the Byzantine tradition at a pragmatic level, and

leads to some tenuously related issues of exclusion from the priestly ministry.[12]

Thirdly, the frequency of ecclesiological presence and participation is a challenge to the clerical hierarchy in drawing the lines of who is recognized as being within the church. If one is not present at the ecclesial gathering and is not a Eucharistic participant liturgically, then is he or she still a member of the church, and if so how? One example of maintaining this type of external ecclesiastical membership is a desert hermit or ascetic. These individuals, according to many hagiographical narratives, do not see themselves and are not viewed in commemorative liturgical memory as being in any way separated from the church, although they may spend decades apart from any official hierarchical contact.[13] The acknowledgment of these individuals' sanctity simultaneous with their legitimacy as members of the Body of Christ (even while not liturgically communing) is determined on criteria that admit a broader way of understanding the inclusivity of the church.

A second challenge to hierarchy that arises, if one conceives of hierarchy as primarily the ecclesiastical leadership of a religious community, is that of exclusion. In Orthodox Christianity, certain ranks of the hierarchy are closed to certain categories of people. Most significant for present-day discourse is the issue of women and the priestly rank of presbyter. Historically, this exclusion does not garner much attention, likely because it was a reflection of a social norm. Byzantine Christianity has a historical tradition of an ordained female diaconate, but the liturgical function of these women was arguably never viewed as a stepping stone to the priesthood or episcopacy as the male diaconate (somewhat erroneously) came to be. Consequently, in contemporary Orthodoxy, women's exclusion from the priestly and episcopal ranks appears historically normative.[14] For a number of reasons, over time the female deaconate became a rarity and has practically disappeared at present in the Eastern Orthodox churches. Resultantly, all ordained ranks of the Eastern Orthodox clergy are in present practice male, even though the rite of female ordination to the diaconate remains "on the books" so to speak.[15]

In addition to the exclusion of women from the priestly hierarchic ranks, there are other hierarchic exclusions within traditional Orthodoxy. For example, the episcopacy is reserved for the unmarried celibate male in current practice despite a rich history of married bishops.[16] Although the practical need for celibate bishops has developed theological justification,

the question remains if this development is theologically essential and immovable, or if it reflects a historical accommodation to express a particular theological claim in a particular time, that now could be adapted or changed to express the same theology more precisely.[17] Even the male priesthood has additional exclusivity within it, as men may be excluded as candidates for the priesthood based on marital, familial, and physical impediments. Moreover, the question of hierarchic exclusivity needs to be reevaluated historically and currently with regard to the Orthodox laity. Lay men and women are similarly restricted, at least historically and canonically, from certain types of sacramental participation and contact at certain times of perceived states of diminished personal integrity, purity, or wholeness (for example, bleeding, seminal fluids, bathing, birth, manslaughter). Although these restrictions are perhaps sometimes pastorally appropriate, they reflect ambiguity surrounding the relationship between ecclesiological participation, mediation of divine power, and sacramental validity.[18]

A third significant area of challenges to hierarchy is that of its association with disparate power dynamics. If hierarchy can be considered as a theological concept central to Orthodoxy, then this association must somehow be resolved in a way that accounts for the necessary inequitable stratification of power and offers protections from its potential earthly abuses. Byzantine Christianity's rich legacy of spiritual guidance is particularly problematic in this context.[19] If one is expected to be obedient and essentially hand over one's will to another human being, that person ideally should be more spiritually authoritative and knowledgeable than the subordinates. The spiritual elder's perceived position of power, however, lends itself to potentially abusive dynamics for the subordinates. Power is primarily problematic if it is held in an unchecked position that can be dangerous to its subordinates without recourse to means of mediation. Not only must correction or limitation of power be administered through those who have power above the person in question, but also by those in subordinate positions. Otherwise, the subordinates are vulnerable to spiritually masked abuses. Specifically, in the nonliturgical context for ecclesiastical leaders and spiritual authorities, the question arises from whence does their power and authority come, and do those subordinate to them have any power themselves? In the context of spiritual authority outside of the ritual administration, there is more of a blurring of the lines between personal piety and the power of one's appointed office. Additionally, there remains ambiguity about how to situate charismatic individuals seemingly outside of the institutionalized

hierarchy who have significant authority and discipleship. Who or what legitimates their power and validates it within authentic Orthodoxy, especially if the charismatic is challenging the authority of the hierarchical administration?

All of these challenges and critiques raise the question: Why hierarchy? How is hierarchy theologically conceived, justified, and produced as an essential part of Christian existence? Although hierarchy appears in a Christian context often as a norm for which great historical evidence can be given, is there sufficient continuity of theological justification in this "tradition" of hierarchy that substantiates it as a spiritual necessity in the Christian past and present? Or, if hierarchy is some humanly constructed innovation of the Christian faith, why has it endured across generations and throughout many variations of Christianity? Has a lineage of authoritative clerical men simply failed to imagine it otherwise, and squashed the voices of those who might? Have they not envisioned some more egalitarian or democratic form, relying instead as a default on an ecclesiological model associated with divinely given authority and continuity with a retrospectively sacralized past? More grievously, does hierarchy persist as a type of intentional, damaging, and sexist "sacred domination?"[20] To address these questions I turn to the tradition in which hierarchy as a theological signifier and ideal originates—that of Byzantine Christianity.

Introducing Byzantine Hierarchy and Its Dionysian Legacy

For Byzantine Christians, hierarchy carried more positive values than it does for many today. Historically, "hierarchy" at the time of its linguistic introduction was widely accepted in Christianity, and for many present day adherents to hierarchically organized religious traditions the term persists with a positive connotation.[21] However, these values are not limited to tradition conceived of as historical record, or to the conception of hierarchy as merely a stratification of clerical administrators. In the Byzantine Christian theological tradition, hierarchy appears elusive and yet constant, affirmed and yet subverted, inequitable and yet the only means of true equality, and the source of ecclesiastical authority and the limit of it. In all this liminality and paradox, hierarchy is foremost determined and empowered through divine reflectivity. Literally, hierarchy is a combination of the Greek words ἱερός (meaning "sacred") and ἀρχή (meaning "beginning," "principle," or "sovereignty"). Although hierarchy is by no means a

uniquely Christian term or concept in its broadest application, in the history of specifically Byzantine Christianity (the context in which it first emerges and is adopted as authoritative) it does have a rich theological lineage. This lineage warrants consideration in any attempt to evaluate hierarchy's significance and application historically, and its present-day relevance.[22] The late fifth- or early sixth-century author known by the pseudonym Dionysius the Areopagite is generally recognized as having first coined the term "hierarchy," and subsequently developed it in a Christian context.[23] Despite its seemingly simple literal meaning, Dionysius gives the concept a multitude of complex theological explanations in his two hierarchical treatises—the *Celestial Hierarchy* and the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, as well as in his *Eighth Letter*. With Dionysius, the term "hierarchy" is coined and given a theological interpretation, definition, and justification that is carried through the Byzantine ecclesiastical legacy even to the present day.[24] As Dionysius constructs it, hierarchy is more than just an ecclesiastical means of administration. It also is the essential means of authentically communicating divinity (both through participation in God and communing God either sacramentally or iconically to others).[25] This conception of hierarchy is inclusive of but not limited to ecclesiastical order and ranks of spiritual authority. The fulfillment of one's hierarchical rank is determined by the ability to authentically communicate divinity in that rank.[26] Although some modern scholars characterize Dionysius's hierarchy as being somewhat detached from practical application, his hierarchic legacy was readily received and applied in the history of Byzantine Christianity.[27]

As evident in the writings of three later Byzantine theologians—Maximus the Confessor (c. 580–662), Niketas Stethatos (c. 1000–90), and Nicholas Cabasilas (c. 1319–91)—Dionysius's construction of hierarchy as a theological ideal is most relevantly appropriated, and robustly reflected, in challenging liturgical and problematic practical contexts. These three historically distinct Byzantine theologians offer examples of Dionysian hierarchic dependence and simultaneous divergence within Byzantine Christianity. Consequently, along with Dionysius they serve as the primary subjects of this book. Obviously, many other significant appropriators of Dionysius exist in Byzantium—John of Damascus and Gregory of Palamas are particularly noteworthy. Maximus, Stethatos, and Cabasilas, however, reflect Dionysian hierarchical dependence and appropriation in the three domains in which Dionysius most richly develops his theology of hierarchy: the theoretical, the ritual, and the problematic-practical contexts.[28]

Moreover between all four of these historical authors there is a shared basic belief about the determination of power and legitimate authority based on participation in divinity. Although these chosen authors span a considerable period of time, they each: (1) discuss the hierarchic ideal with reference to ritual significance, (2) attempt some negotiation of the hierarchic ideal in problematic practice, and (3) indicate Dionysius as an authoritative antecedent for understanding ecclesiastical hierarchy. Even though the particular ways they appropriate Dionysian hierarchy in diverse historical and intellectual contexts varies, Maximus, Stethatos, and Cabasilas provide evidence of a common theological assumption that ecclesiastical hierarchy is constituted by divinizing activity and validated by divine likeness.

To briefly introduce the Byzantine theologians who will serve as the interlocutors in my analysis of Orthodox hierarchy and power, I begin with Maximus, who appropriates Dionysius significantly in many of his works and reflects and refines a Dionysian construction of ecclesiastical hierarchy as constituted by that which communicates divinity. For Maximus, the authentic ecclesiastical hierarchy as the communication of divinity becomes synonymous with the correct diothelite christological confession of faith.[29] In his liturgically contemplative *Mystagogy*, Maximus prefaces his own work as distinct from Dionysius's *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, but in his content he repeatedly cites the *Corpus Dionysiacum*.[30] Likewise, in his ascetic writings he displays a simplified structure of monastic spiritual authority seemingly counterintuitive to the stratified reality Dionysius proposes. Maximus, however, does employ the Dionysian determination of divinizing activity to legitimate individuals' fulfillment of these roles, which is explicit in his definition of bishop, priest, and deacon.[31] In addition to his own writings displaying a Dionysian dependence, the records of Maximus's trial depict Maximus in continuity with Dionysian ideals. Maximus draws the boundaries of ecclesiological legitimacy in his own polemical historical context by defining valid ecclesiastical hierarchy in Dionysian terms of its ability to communicate divinity through christological confession, reflection, and participation.[32]

Next, Stethatos is a unique case in Dionysian appropriation and dependence because much like Dionysius he has a treatise devoted to the subject of hierarchy specifically. Even though Stethatos was the hagiographer, disciple, and editor of Symeon the New Theologian (d. 1022), who is often read as the Byzantine charismatic culmination of anti-institutionalized hi-

erarchical sentiment, Stethatos's text makes significant use of lengthy Dionysian citations idealizing hierarchy. Stethatos's *On Hierarchy* expands the Dionysian triadic hierarchic construction of the priestly ranks based on liturgical function, while also taking Dionysius's construction of hierarchy as divine communication to its seemingly structurally nullifying conclusion in affirmation of authentic hierarchy. In applying this conception of hierarchy to issues of spiritual authority in his own day, Niketas appropriates the Dionysian hierarchical ideal in a way that allows him to reconfigure the legitimacy of the ecclesiastical hierarchy as more charismatically constituted.[33]

Lastly, Cabasilas reflects explicit Dionysian dependence with his liturgical configuration in *The Life in Christ* and *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy* by repeatedly citing Dionysius as a source for liturgical contemplation. In these texts, Cabasilas reflects the Dionysian focus on the sacraments baptism, chrismation, and Eucharist as hierarchical because of their ability to communicate divinity. Cabasilas uses the liturgical context and contemplation as a springboard for his theoretical consideration of the hierarchical dilemma of the relationship between the ministrant's personal piety and the efficacy of the sacraments. Moreover, in an arguably Dionysian move, Cabasilas defends the perfection of the sacraments based on their divine origin, power, and end as well as the mutual dependence between the laity and clerical ranks for hierarchical participation.[34] With his more practical-polemical writings, Cabasilas, although not citing Dionysius directly, reflects a Dionysian negotiation of problematic clerics based on the construction of authentic hierarchic fulfillment of one's rank through divine reflectivity.[35] Consequently, other Dionysian inheritors and appropriators may reflect Dionysian hierarchic ideals as well, but Maximus, Stethatos, and Cabasilas serve as close comparison points to unearth a persistent interpretive conception of hierarchy across historically diverse theological contexts because of their treatment of the ecclesiastical hierarchic ideal in comparable domains, and citation of Dionysius as authoritative.

By way of close engagement with the lives and writings of these authors in the following chapters, I assert that the concept of ecclesiastical hierarchy is primarily theorized, liturgically realized, and negotiated in praxis by being constructed as and identified with the authentic communication of divine power. Specifically, Maximus, Stethatos, and Cabasilas successfully maneuver theological and practical challenges in ecclesiastical order and spiritual authority by mirroring and adapting the construction of

hierarchy originally expressed by Dionysius. In this interpretation, ecclesiastical hierarchy is determined and validated by the cooperative divinizing activity, real communion with divinity, and participative manifestation of the divine image among humanity.

Introducing Power Theorists to the Byzantines

The engagement evinced in the domains of theory, liturgy, and practice by Dionysius, Maximus, Stethatos, and Cabasilas attests to a distinct theology of hierarchy grounded in a unanimously accepted conception of power. For these authors, hierarchy is not just a lofty and unattainable ideal of harmonious ecclesial interactions, it is a theological ideal realized in the very real human relations of ecclesiastical praxis. The hierarchical interpretation, application, and negotiation reiterating the claim that hierarchy is good is grounded in two foundational assumptions expressed with only subtle shades of variation by these four Byzantine authors: that authentic power is divinely originative and divinely reflective. In the chapters that follow, this interpretation of power is developed, and serves as the subtext for the ways in which hierarchy is configured and interpreted with continuity by the Byzantine authors. These foundational beliefs also serve as the basis of a historically grounded yet presently relevant contemporary Orthodox theory of power.

Orthodox Christian discourse about ecclesiastical hierarchy, like all discourse, is a discourse of power. Byzantine authors reveal and produce power linguistically, and give the readers insight into power production in ritual and practical pastoral contexts. Therefore, the insights of contemporary power theorists such as Karl Marx, Hannah Arendt, Michel Foucault, and Judith Butler are useful in rethinking the role of power in Byzantine ecclesiastical hierarchical interpretations, negotiations, and appropriations as a pervasive and sustaining element (rather than one of domination). A broader theological interpretation of hierarchy necessitates a broader consideration of power. Hierarchy as a religiously conceived ideal and system is a mediation, production, and acknowledgment of power in a way that finds resonances with the critical theories of these more modern authors.[36] This resonant framing for reconsidering the relationship between power and hierarchy can be initiated by Butler's statement about power that

> we are used to thinking of power as what presses on the subject from the outside, as what subordinates, sets underneath, and relegates to a lower order. This is surely a fair description of part of what power does. But if, following Foucault, we understand power as forming the subject as well, as providing the very condition of its existence and the trajectory of its desire, then power is not simply what we oppose but also, in a strong sense, what we depend on for our existence and what we harbor and preserve in the beings that we are.[37]

Hierarchy, as I will argue in coming chapters, for the Byzantines enacts this dual characterization of power as that which is wielded by authorities and that which forms the Christian subject.

Power, as Byzantines understood it and power as modern theorists conceptualize it, maintains significant elements of distinction. Reading Byzantine power in terms of several insights from Marx, Arendt, Foucault, and Butler, however, contributes to and challenges our understanding of why and how ecclesiastical hierarchy persists to the present age among churches of Byzantine heritage (namely, the Eastern Orthodox traditions). Previous scholarship on Byzantine theological conceptions of ecclesiastical power engaging the perspectives of critical theory is very limited.[38] Interpreting power as something produced, something ceded, the mode by which the "self" is realized, the means by which knowledge is formed and conveyed, however, is an interpretation that finds parallels in the Byzantine religious understanding of hierarchy.

Although it might appear contradictory to engage four disparate power theorists as informing a singular interpretation and theorization of Byzantine ecclesiastical hierarchical power, Marx, Arendt, Foucault, and Butler each offer something that aids in the reading of Byzantine hierarchy and its relation to power in a new light.[39] As Byzantine theology often is characterized by trying to know the unknowable and speak the ineffable, and is marked by a singular divinity manifest through multiplicity, there is a certain continuity within the Byzantine theological tradition with this approach.[40] Marx's conception of power in terms of class preservation and economic exchange, Arendt's envisioning power primarily as a group potential realized in concert, Foucault's recognition of power produced as dispersed throughout a system, and Butler's interpretation of power as a generative constraint of the individual are useful for considering the

identification and interpretation of power as represented in the Byzantine idealization and negotiation of ecclesiastical power and authority.[41] These contemporary theorists provide conceptions of power through which an Orthodox theology of power can be situated, brought into conversation, and ultimately articulated with as much clarity as is possible for something contextualized in apophatic mystery.[42] Consequently, through this trans-historical interdisciplinary engagement, our understanding of how hierarchy relates to power can be deepened historically, and brought into a broader contemporary conversation of religious power.

Before introducing a brief foretaste of how Byzantine hierarchy and power can be illuminated by engagement with contemporary critical theorists, it is first useful to briefly introduce the major contributions from each theorist that illuminate the relationship between power and hierarchy. I begin in chronological progression with Karl Marx (1818–83), the German philosopher and revolutionary. Taking a Marxist approach to interrogating the relation between power and hierarchy leads us to consider the question of why those in the "dominant" positions within the hierarchy are in these positions. Additionally, and perhaps more significantly, Marx prompts us to consider why those in the "dominated classes" accept being dominated and accept (or do not even recognize) their "oppression." Although the terms of domination and oppression are incompatible with the Byzantine theological conception of hierarchy, they prompt us to consider the rhetorical and ritualized styles by which the hierarchy functioned among both lay and priestly classes. Likewise, in light of Marx we must examine why and how power is dispersed through the ecclesiastical society in the configuration in which it exists, and how this relation of social power reproduces or shifts the stratification of one rank above another. Lastly, the strategies employed to secure power in terms of class, especially the "mystification of power" and ideological domination, as well as any tactics for resisting this domination, should function as part of our intellectual context.[43]

Hannah Arendt (1906–75), the German political theorist, offers us an oft-contested but significant contribution in the way of distinguishing power and violence as discreet yet interdependent entities. As she constructs it, power exists in potential amid the consent of groups, and is realized through actions. On the other hand, violence is enacted through implements, but is not the same as power. Violence also can destroy power. This distinction is useful for analyzing the way that power functions in hierarchy, and in naming those who appear to be in positions of power but also

abuse their subordinates. The exercise of power, and the recognition of the authority of those who are acknowledged to possess it (based on their offices), indicate that power always comes from the people, and "authority" is a specific manifestation of power.[44] For Arendt, authority does not come from persuasion or coercion, but rather through the recognition of legitimacy lent from collective others.[45] This is very significant for considering the relation between one's hierarchic position and the degree of its fulfillment in recognizably iconic ways as determinative of ecclesial authority. Moreover, Arendt's distinction between power and violence provides a means of reflecting on the importance of self-determination and autonomy as a safeguard from abuse. If consent is required for power to be power rather than violence, then subordination must be a free and voluntary obedience. This insight is particularly relevant for interrogating the limits of the valorization of suffering within Orthodox theology and practice. Lastly, Arendt also provides us with the notion that power is potential realized in activity, as opposed to some "thing," which accords well with the Byzantine notion of hierarchy realized via activity.[46]

Michel Foucault (1926–84), the French philosophical historian, provides a diffused conception of power wherein power is resituated away from individual agency and instead interpreted as a systemic social production. This way of thinking about power is important for reconsidering its relation to hierarchy because it recognizes that power inheres in the hierarchy itself (opposed to merely with the hierarch). For Foucault, power is constructed through daily social production. It is found embedded in systems, institutions, and human relations. For our purposes, this is useful in considering how power is not only at the "top" of the hierarchy, but also produced within it by relationships and rituals. Discourse then, everything that goes into speaking hierarchy, "can be both an instrument and an effect of power" because, according to Foucault, "discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart."[47] All identities then, are shaped by discourse and systems of power. In order to gain better insight to how hierarchy was believed to function for Byzantine theologians, it is helpful to consider how hierarchy produces identity and in so doing what it restrains and how it is itself restrained. Foucault conceives of power not only as an external imposition upon someone, but more significantly as an internal regulation through normative and repetitive social constructions. More explicitly, power is the ability to shape a "body" and

control the construction of reality and available knowledge.[48] It is worth considering then, how and if hierarchy fits in this paradigm of power from within a constructed system and shapes the "Body" of Christ. There is also the Foucauldian contribution that power is a relation that requires a free alternative and option to act otherwise. This is provocative in the case of commonly characterized systems of domination and subordination such as hierarchy. In the Orthodox tradition of identifying humility, suffering, and obedience with holiness, emphasizing voluntary action with an alternative to act otherwise as a requisite aspect of ecclesiastical power relations offers a protection against the spiritualization of abuse.[49] Moreover, Foucault asserts that power is only known through comparison to other power. This may prove an integral starting point as the Byzantine authors craft authentic ecclesial power as divine. Lastly, Foucault has a brief consideration about the unique shape and interests of "pastoral power," which he acknowledges to be distinct from sovereign or political power. This domain of power may serve as a reference point for distinguishing the hierarchic conception of power by the Byzantines in contrast to other categories of power.[50]

Judith Butler (1956–), the American philosopher and gender theorist, conceives of power as a generating force, but occasionally engages it as repressive and constraining as well. Butler's focus on the performance of identity is worth considering alongside the liturgical building of the hierarchical subject. Additionally important for our interpretation is evaluating how power shapes both the normative and the subversive identities available for people to perform. For Butler, "one is paradoxically both subject to the Power of the . . . cultural norms that constrain and compel one's performance of gender and simultaneously enabled to take up the position of a subject in and through them." When this insight is considered in terms of hierarchical identity, it prompts an assessment of how the Christian subject is formed.[51] Butler's conception of power is distinctively tied to her notion of the performativity of identity. Our emphasis on the liturgical production of hierarchy indicates an agreement with Butler: Social reality is not a given but is continually created as an illusion "through language, gesture, and all manner of symbolic social sign."[52] By embodying and reenacting these constructions we make them appear "natural" and a necessary part of existence.[53] Butler thus poses for us the challenge of the constructedness of hierarchy as the normative (and indeed necessary!) Christian organization. The concept of performativity is intended to reveal hegemonic

conceptions of identity as fictions (but they are not "fictive" in the religious mind of Byzantine theologians, and Butler might assert this is precisely because they are products of them). This poses a significant challenge to our Byzantine authors who seemingly cannot imagine the Christian body otherwise "performed." What can be entertained and is supported by our Byzantine authors, however, is that the fictive human identity created by humans is often unfortunately distinct from the divinely given immovable identity of the human to be realized in divine participation and perfection.[54] Butler reiterates that compulsively enacting socially prescribed forms, as a way of demonstrating conformity to gender ideals, trains the body to become sexually legible.[55] This claim may be helpful in examining how Christians must train their ecclesial Body to be legible in terms of divine likeness, and how individuals train and conform liturgically to perform divine archetypes through hierarchical participation.

Byzantine and Orthodox conceptions and productions of power in light of the insights mentioned above reveal a fundamental assumption about power that allows greater flexibility in how the theologian maneuvers and constructs hierarchy practically and theologically. As I will suggest in subsequent chapters, the implicit position assumed by Dionysius, Maximus, Stethatos, and Cabasilas is fundamentally distinct from that of the modern theorists and yet compellingly illumined by them. According to these Byzantine theologians, power originates and proceeds from God alone. All power, to the extent that any power is real, is divine. Any human power is only a participation in divine power. Perhaps this is unsurprising and can be said of many divine qualities such as goodness or being. These authors' hierarchical maneuvering and theorization attest that wherever divinely reflective and participative self-emptying is acknowledged, there also is a manifestation of power. One only has power (and here I do mean power, not just authority) to the extent one gives power away.

The generalized idealization of hierarchy (for which Dionysius is critiqued by at least one notable Orthodox historian) as that which communicates divinity, however, is perplexing in practice when one considers the many historical abuses of power from within ecclesiastical hierarchies. Regardless of the historically and socially imbedded factors subtly shaping the hierarchical model of ecclesiastical administration as *the* model of church organization, Byzantines did interact with hierarchy as a religious ideal in such a way as to produce and perpetuate it as the source of accessing divine power within the Orthodox ecclesiastical community.[56] The hierarchical

discontinuities between ideology and practice are paradoxically complicated and ameliorated when hierarchy is constructed as the only means of mediating divine power.[57]

The power of the ecclesiastical hierarchy is imbedded within the relations between God and all the heavenly hosts, and the lay and clerical human participants constituting the church. Consequently, remaking and disciplining of the Body of Christ in conformity with the divine archetype is constantly taking place to conform to the "normative" expectation and implicit assumptions of how the christological "body" looks and functions.[58] Although we cannot retrieve some pure "Byzantine Hierarchy" instantiated as a historical reality, we do find within the Orthodox traditions of praxis and theology refractions of attempts to maintain and reinforce the ideal of hierarchy as divinely communicative of divine power, and the means of transforming oneself by this power.[59] This will hopefully become clear in the coming chapters.

Orthodox power, as reflected in the hierarchy, is complex in its manifestation of strength and freedom. It is confounding to human conceptions of power, and simultaneously recognizable as authentic due to its divine similitude. Because power is conceived of in this way by various Byzantine theologians, hierarchy becomes the means of accessing and resolving the paradox of attaining and administering power in a way that further shapes one in and communicates to the world divine likeness.[60] Ultimately, ecclesiastical hierarchy mediates, produces, and ascribes power to its participants in a way that is believed to be uniquely communicative of, and conducive to, divine similitude. Byzantine Christian theorization, maintenance, and justification of hierarchy is constructed and reinforced by Dionysius, Maximus, Stethatos, and Cabasilas as that which is suited to mediate the paradox of God's infinitely sovereign and infinitely self-giving power in the finite world.[61]

The Present Work

The primary argument in the following chapters is that Orthodox ecclesiastical hierarchy as developed and reflected by Byzantine theologians is most fundamentally and consistently rendered as the communication of divinity. The historical, rhetorical, and theological moves that Dionysius, Maximus, Stethatos, and Cabasilas make to realize this conception of hierarchy in both pastoral and liturgical praxis are shaped by the funda-

mental assumption that true power comes from God alone. Additionally, these authors evidence and rely on the belief that power's authoritative execution and legitimate presence should reveal divine likeness.[62] Thus, they configure hierarchy as the uniquely suited and divinely given means of mediating and producing divine power on earth. This configuration betrays theological ideals of hierarchy and power that have great relevance for contemporary Orthodox Christian conversations engaging the exclusive, inclusive, and power-based challenges of hierarchy.

The thematic approach of this book warrants that each Byzantine author's hierarchical ideal be considered in light of the particularity of the ritual referents and negotiation of the ideal in practice. This mirrors the emphases found in Dionysius's thought, where the significance of the ecclesiastical hierarchy is primarily found through reference to liturgical rites and in his maintenance of the hierarchy's structure and function in seemingly problematic instances of practical application.[63] These aspects of hierarchy more fully reveal the specifically ecclesiastical aspect of hierarchy's importance for Dionysius, and as such are used as comparable characteristics between the hierarchic ideologies of the other authors under discussion. That is not to say that the Dionysian or other authors' hierarchic visions as a whole are not considered, only that their evaluations are prioritized to shed light on understanding hierarchy in the ecclesiastical and applied settings specifically. By examining not only what the Byzantine authors say abstractly or theoretically about hierarchy, but also closely attending to the situation of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in liturgical contexts and in instances of both textual and historical tension, I offer a portrait of each author's hierarchic vision, its lines of uniqueness, and its parallels of continuity. Additionally, as each author has his own particular context, motives, and sources for writing, where appropriate I provide historical and intellectual background for analysis in order to construct as compelling and accurate an argument as possible. I outline the religious conflicts, liturgical setting, major influences, and social hierarchical ideals present in each author's historical context at the onset of each Byzantine chapter as backgrounds influencing each author's textual expression and my own interpretation of it. I situate primary texts historically (however, with an unabashed interest in their relevance for the present) to understand what they may have signified to their historical audiences. Following the four chronological chapter studies of Byzantine hierarchical engagements, I offer a cumulative reflection on the theoretical starting points and implications of

power reflected by the hierarchical theology developed by the Byzantines. This reading of power is intentionally challenged and illumined by several insights of modern power theorists in order that a more robust theory of Orthodox power in its particular features may become clear. Additionally, the Byzantine theological outline of Orthodox power I offer poses several challenges to contemporary interpretations of power in both secular and religious studies. It is through this broad and critical reconsideration of what is meant by "hierarchy" and "power" that I present an otherwise obscured yet already present aspect of the Orthodox theological tradition available for contemporary application.

In sum, with a greater understanding for how the category of hierarchy was theorized, ritually realized, and negotiated in practice during the Byzantine period, we gain a much stronger sense of how premodern Orthodox Christians balanced their ideals with their realities. With so many historical institutional abuses, power struggles, failures of mediation and leadership, and potential for inferring ontological orders of personal value, it is important to address why and how various authors maintained hierarchy as the essential paradigm for Orthodox Christian leadership, spiritual advancement, and ritual participation.[64] A more nuanced interpretation of hierarchy's historically attested theological significance and negotiation is important for understanding the persistence of hierarchy in both past and present Christian communities. Understanding the theorization of power behind these hierarchical conceptualizations and maneuverings may help forge new paths of thinking about the challenges and problems associated with Orthodox ecclesiastical hierarchy and the application of power amidst religious communities.

CHAPTER 1

Dionysius the Areopagite's Divinizing Hierarchy

Dionysius the Areopagite is widely acknowledged as the terminological and theological founder of "hierarchy" as a Christian concept.[1] Scholars agree that "hierarchy" is one of Dionysius's most significant and enduring contributions, but the modern interpretation and evaluation of this contribution varies considerably.[2] Charles Stang, for example, characterizes Dionysian hierarchy as "a providential ordering of beings . . . who can claim no analogy, no relative likeness to God," suggesting a limitation in the hierarchy's ability to communicate divinity. In comparison, Paul Rorem defines Dionysius's hierarchy as "enabling the imitation of God," which expresses a potentiality. Ysabel de Andia, on the other hand, defines hierarchy as "imitation of the High Priest in dispensing the divine light," so that hierarchy appears as a fact of already accomplished divine communication.[3] Moreover, among contemporary scholars, a unified relationship between hierarchy and power at the practical and theological levels appears only as a peripheral consideration. Alexander Golitzin is a notable exception with his theological interpretation that "a hierarchy is . . . a community, a single corporate organism bound together by the exercise of a loving and mutual providence whose origins and enabling power come directly from God," which suggests more applied extensions of hierarchy through an emphasis on community relationships.[4] Outside of the study of the Areopagite's writings specifically, often hierarchy is severed from its robust theological attributions and interpretations. Consequently, Dionysius's lending of "hierarchy" to Christian theology appears in modern scholarship to be primarily of terminological significance.[5] Andrew Louth

persuasively claims that although the authenticity of the *Corpus Dionysiacum* was initially contested in the sixth century, the term "hierarchy" immediately resonated throughout Christendom with enduring acceptance. For many, both in antiquity and modernity, hierarchy signifies the organizational and clerical administrative structure of the church.[6] Although this is one meaning of hierarchy for Dionysius—based on the church being the living Body of Christ and priests bringing about the communication of the Body of Christ—hierarchy is more than just an administrative organization. Dionysius founds hierarchy more ideologically and practically around communicating divine power to this world and transforming earthly powers by it. Accordingly, Dionysian hierarchy is often critiqued by scholars for being too idealized for practical application, or if applied, for resulting in a type of infallible or "magical" clericalism.[7] In its modern application, Dionysius's own theological rendering of hierarchy appears nearly inconsequential beyond the *Corpus Dionysiacum,* compared to the use of the hierarchic term itself. As I will detail in the following chapters, however, this truncating of the significance of "hierarchy" does not accurately reflect its Orthodox theological development.[8]

In contrast to the trend of distancing the oft-perceived problematic theology of Dionysian hierarchy from the term, there is a way to read the paradoxical theology of divine power as determinative of hierarchical content. Dionysius develops ecclesiastical hierarchy precisely as a fixed signifier for the flexible means by which humans communicate God in the world. Consequently, the concept of ecclesiastical hierarchy is flexible in the composition of its human content, yet fixed in the immovable divine reality it signifies. Hierarchy for Dionysius is the means of divinization and the divinizing activity itself. Ecclesiastical hierarchy, if read in this light, is foremost determined by divinizing activity, realized in sacramental ritual, and the very means by which practical issues perceived as challenges to church order can be overcome while maintaining the ultimate necessity and goodness of hierarchy as a means of participating in divine power. Therefore, ecclesiastical hierarchy is most fruitfully and consistently read in the *Corpus Dionysiacum* as a signifier for a dynamic divinizing reality. As we shall see in subsequent discussions of later Byzantine authors, the conception of hierarchy as that which divinizes pervades discussions of church legitimacy even where the term is absent—suggesting a persisting Dionysian hierarchic theological legacy.

Central to understanding Dionysius's vision and negotiation of hierarchy are the historical and pseudonymic contexts in which the *Corpus Dionysiacum* was composed. There is no certainty about the author of the *Corpus Dionysiacum*'s precise provenance or dates, but the individual who wrote as Dionysius the Areopagite was likely a late fifth- or early sixth-century Syrian monk.[9] Dionysius's writings show the influence of Antiochian liturgical practices and familiarity with the liturgical customs of Constantinople.[10] The difficulty of determining the historical situation of the *Corpus Dionysiacum* from its content is augmented by the fact that modern scholars have no access to its original Greek text.[11] Moreover, the ambiguous historical situation of the author of the *Corpus Dionysiacum* is compounded by the texts' historically and scholarly contested ideology. In its early and late Byzantine receptions (as well as modern scholarship), the *Corpus Dionysiacum* received a wide range of (and often contradictory) interpretations, and has been used to justify arguments from opposing sides of theological debates. For example, Dionysius is used as an authoritative source to argue both sides of the sixth-century christological controversies and the fourteenth-century hesychast controversy.[12]

In modern scholarship, the ideology and "orthodoxy" of the Areopagite is similarly contested. John Meyendorff identifies Dionysius as needing christological corrective, Jaroslav Pelikan describes Dionysius as proposing a type of "crypto-Origenism" in the Christian tradition, and Rosemary Arthur makes a compelling case that Dionysius actually held miaphysite beliefs. Others emphasize the *Corpus Dionysiacum*'s appropriation of Neoplatonism, with claims that Dionysius offers a false usurpation of philosophy or that through his pseudonym he tries to sneak Neoplatonic ideals into Christian theology.[13] Despite this diversity of opinion on how to situate the Areopagite historically and theologically, the centrality of hierarchy as an original and significant contribution is uncontested.[14]

In addition to his historical context, Dionysius's choice of pseudonym prompts the reader to imaginatively contextualize the *Corpus Dionysiacum* within the apostolic age. According to Acts 17:34, Dionysius was among those who converted after Paul's sermon at the Areopagus in Athens (Acts 17:19–32). By adopting this pseudonym, Dionysius situates himself as equal to the apostles, which according to the *Corpus Dionysiacum* is the highest hierarchic rank in "our" (ecclesiastical) hierarchy.[15] Stang suggests that Dionysius chooses this pseudonym as an ascetic practice in apophatic

"unknowing" to solicit the divine presence. Other scholars propose the pseudonym is a cunning attempt to cloak the Neoplatonic content of the *Corpus Dionysiacum* with an apostolically endorsed Christian veneer.[16] While Stang retrieves the intentionality of the pseudonym in a more positive light than many of his predecessors, in a way that appreciates pseudonymous writing as an ascetic enterprise, he does not fully extend the implications of this ascetic move to the realm of hierarchy in terms of spiritual authority and the production of power in a divinely imitative way.[17] Specifically, the question remains, why would the likely monastic author of the *Corpus Dionysiacum* assume the pseudonym of a first-century apostolic bishop only to write about a hierarchic vision in which stepping beyond one's hierarchic rank (e.g., that of monk) and rebuking those above (e.g., priests and bishops) is explicitly rejected?[18] Taking his pseudonym into consideration as part of his hierarchic idealization, realization, and negotiation paints a fuller picture of hierarchy as the active communication of the divine image rather than as a fixed image itself. Within the hierarchic construction of power Dionysius posits, the pseudonym can be read as a tool of divine communication, which renders Dionysius empowered through giving up of the self rather than (but not exclusive of!) merely subverting temporal and ecclesiastical order. Although historically contextualizing Dionysius's writings and person is only possible to a limited and hypothetical degree, it is still sufficient to conclude that the *Corpus Dionysiacum*'s hierarchic discourse developed in historical and imagined (in the case of the pseudonym) times of proliferating ecclesiastical and monastic offices alongside internal power struggles for legitimacy.[19]

Hierarchy in Theory

Dionysius constructs hierarchy as that which communicates divinity to humanity and that by which humanity communes in divinity. Hierarchy is a direct result of the outpouring of the triune Godhead, or divine "thearchy," and the mediation of divine power in the world.[20] Dionysius founds his notion of hierarchy as that which divinizes. Consequently, the activities of divinizing and manifesting recognizable divine likeness determines who and what is properly named hierarchy. Prioritizing the divinely communicative function of ecclesiastical hierarchy as determinative of its content unifies the diverse ways Dionysius employs and describes ecclesiastical hierarchy. Hierarchy is fixed in that it is ultimately a divine reality and the

means by which that reality is made manifest. On the other hand, it is necessarily in constant adaptation to authentically communicate the perfect divinity through imperfect humanity. Moreover, hierarchy in its structure and application uniquely mediates divine power and reflects it as paradoxical self-giving and service. It is this participative outpouring unto others that empowers each rank of the hierarchy authentically to function as an icon of God.[21] This interpretation of hierarchy is highlighted by Dionysius's ritual contextualization, allows him to successfully maneuver otherwise hierarchically nullifying situations, and (as I will argue in subsequent chapters) is the most significant aspect of hierarchy for the interpretation and negotiation of power by several later Byzantine authors.

Dionysius defines hierarchy several times throughout the *Corpus Dionysiacum* with different formulations. These various definitions, however, are united by the foundational characteristic that hierarchy's activity—the act of divinizing—is determinative of all its other components. Several of Dionysius's most direct (and oft-cited) definitions of hierarchy include: an "inspired, divine, and divinely worked understanding, activity, and perfection," "arrangement of the sacred realities," a "gift to ensure the salvation and divinization of every being endowed with reason and intelligence," "a sacred order, a state of understanding and an activity approximating as closely as possible to the divine," and "forever looking directly at the comeliness of God."[22] Dionysius unites these seemingly diverse formulations by emphasizing hierarchy as the means of communicating and realizing divine power among humanity.[23] The hierarchy as divinizing activity is simultaneously an order, an arrangement, an understanding, a divine vision, and perfection. It is a means of divine empowerment through divine similitude. For Dionysius, becoming God-like through participation occurs in a way that is like God. Essentially, Dionysius figures the ascent of humans to God, as well as God's condescension to humanity, as orderly, arranged, and transfigurative.[24] Nowhere does Dionysius express the ideal of hierarchy as merely the clerical and administrative ranks of the earthly institutional church (although in as much as these ranks bring about divinization they are included in this hierarchic ideal). The ecclesiastical hierarchy as Dionysius constructs it includes a triple triad of sacraments, ordained ranks, and laity.[25] Hierarchy functioning at each of these levels is most basically that which brings divinity and humanity into communion.

Dionysius reflects the underlying characterization of hierarchy as that which divinizes by paralleling the image of the hierarchy with the image

of God. Although which "orthodoxy" Dionysius actually holds is unclear, Dionysius reflects on the Trinity in developing hierarchy as divinely reflective by envisioning it as triadic groupings.[26] Hierarchy in its active and triadic structures is thus consistent with both Dionysius's Christian and Neoplatonic contexts.[27] While the Neoplatonic trinity is undoubtedly influential on the *Corpus Dionysiacum,* the Christian divine Trinitarian model is more so. As Valentina Izmirlieva observes, Dionysius's model of hierarchy is "distinctly non-hierarchical," because it creates humanity in the likeness of the Trinitarian God who is free of any ontological hierarchical distinctions such as those found between the One, the Mind, and the Soul in Neoplatonism.[28] Based on the divine model employed by Dionysius, hierarchy is indeed strictly ordered but also constituted by complete equality. The order of the hierarchy is based in and ordered by the divine Logos and therefore the human hierarchy in its authentic form conveys this divine likeness and internal divine presence.[29] The definitions of hierarchy and the triadic structure through which Dionysius describes and explains hierarchy thus reflect and realize the divine image. Dionysius's hierarchy manifests a divinely reflective equalizing unity and stratified diversity based on Trinitarian referents.[30]

The divine image is also communicated in hierarchical likeness by Dionysius's construction of hierarchy as activity. Reflecting Christian and Neoplatonic influences, Dionysius conceives of God most properly as activity, as "being," or more precisely "beyond being."[31] God being "beyond being" implies not only that hierarchy is determined by its activity—participating in God's activity in the world—but also reflects a certain Dionysian apophatic mediation of participation in the God who is "beyond being." An individual's hierarchic participation as determined by divinizing activity thus reflects and participates in the God who cannot be named in terms of static attributes, but nevertheless "Is." The individual functioning in his or her particular rank correctly is one that manifests divinizing activity through voluntary self-emptying in relation to others, not a set of humanly established and cataphatically named attributes. Again, the self-emptying activity of divine communication within the hierarchy is reflective of divine condescension, as Dionysius explains, "because of his (God's) love for humanity he has deigned to come down to us and that, like a fire, has made one with himself all those capable of being divinized."[32] The activity of divine love is communicating divinity to others through self-condescension.

The being of everything and everyone is ultimately in the performance of that one's proper and divinely given activities. Consequently, authentic hierarchy is constituted in the fulfillment of its participants' proper function of divinizing activity. Hierarchy is not an isolated individual activity, but is the communication of divinity mediated through interpersonal relations. Dionysius defines hierarchy in one instance as an "arrangement" of sacred realities. This arrangement, however, is not something other than God, but rather is an authentic "theophany" reflective of the energy and power of God in all of creation, and the potential of creation to participate in divinity.[33] Dionysius explains that all who have "power for 'being'" have this power from "a Power beyond being" because "God's infinite power is distributed among all things and there is nothing in the world entirely bereft of power."[34] Dionysius portrays the stratified hierarchical arrangement not as an intentional human construction, but rather communication with God. God as the divine hierarch and model of all hierarchs manifests an outpouring of God's self that results in divine unity. Dionysius explains in reference to God that "with unswerving power he gives himself outward for the sake of the divinization of those who are returned to him," which suggests the giving of oneself for the sake of another is a manifestation of divine power.[35] This arrangement is not some external order imposed on individuals to keep power over the masses or a stratification through which persons are intended to ascend; rather, it is the divinely revelatory orientation that constitutes each being through their relation to others in a divinely participatory way.[36] As Dionysius explains, God's "transcendent power is inexpressible, unknowable, inconceivably great, and as it flows over, it empowers whatever is weak and it preserves and directs the humblest of its echoes." Divine empowerment occurs paradoxically within the humble and weak.[37] Each person's hierarchic rank is determined by his or her proper relation to others in a way that manifests God and places the individual in communion with God.[38] When Dionysius speaks of maintaining one's place in the hierarchy, it is precisely because it is only in one's hierarchical rank that one can be divinized. Even though the hierarchy may appear immovable, it is constantly active in each person realizing communion with others and the God beyond being.[39]

Dionysius equates arrangement with activity, so that proper arrangement makes divinization possible. Dionysius claims that "a hierarchy is a sacred order, a state of understanding and an activity approximating as closely as possible to the divine," equating sacred arrangement with divinization in

an active sense.[40] Dionysius's inclusion of order as synonymous with the "state of understanding and the activity which approximates as closely as possible to the divine," explains hierarchy in terms of bringing about divine communication. The idea of order mentioned in this definition is, as René Roques observes, double in meaning. It is simultaneously "order" in the sense of arrangement and in the sense of command. Being fixed in its divine origination and divinizing activity, the hierarchy is the divinely given order to be divinized and the very means to accomplish this divinization.[41]

Dionysius constructs the ecclesiastical hierarchy as the divine image that is none other than divinizing activity. He identifies this divinizing activity with hierarchy by explaining that, "if one talks of hierarchy, what is meant is a certain perfect arrangement, an image of the beauty of God which sacredly works out the mysteries of its own enlightenment in the orders and levels of understanding of the hierarchy, and which is likened toward its own source as much as is permitted."[42] The hierarchy is an image of the beauty of God, which is not something other than God, but rather the energy of God active in the world.[43] Dionysius's God as the "unknown" God is reflected in the construction of hierarchy as that which makes humans like God. The hierarchy reveals "all the sacred elements within it," and, unless one were to read Dionysius in a completely unorthodox way, each "sacred reality" must communicate God—a God who Dionysius recognizes precisely through his incomprehensibility.[44] Hierarchy as divinizing activity is a paradox of divine likeness, imaging and revealing God authentically at each level despite human inability to ever fully know God. The hierarchy is that which authentically communicates God and thus communicates not something other than, or comparable to God, but true knowledge of and participation in God Himself.[45] Thus, hierarchy as divinizing activity bridges the apparent apophatic/cataphatic divide Dionysius creates by naming God as "beyond being."[46] Accordingly, there is not an unresolved and vacuous hierarchic tension that results in the individual being "cleft open, split, doubled, and therefore deified" as Stang suggests, but rather, the hierarchy is constituted by the manifestation and presence of the power of God.[47]

The multiplicity with which Dionysius names hierarchy suggests an apophatic quality to the term, akin to what is found in the *Divine Names*. If the meaning of hierarchy is, as Louth suggests, ultimately something

that must be known through "unknowing," then the meaning of hierarchy must be a true and positive knowledge (which is paradoxically unknowing) of God through self-emptying participation. This apophatic dynamic of the hierarchy is appropriate because Dionysius claims hierarchy is "divine."[48] If indeed the infinite God who is ultimately unknowable is perfectly known in the hierarchy, then apophatic tension is not one that needs to be resolved, but rather a tenor of divine imitation through self-negation on behalf of another in which the one being divinized should dwell.[49]

Despite all of Dionysius's apophatic discourse, or perhaps more precisely in agreement with his apophatic discourse, Dionysius defines hierarchy in terms of coming to know the divine reality through divine knowledge and vision. Hierarchy is thus the communication of the divine image and the divine participation that deifies. It is "forever looking directly at the comeliness of God," a hierarchic activity that determines its human arrangement and components.[50] Hierarchy as divine vision necessitates hierarchy as divinization because the act of seeing God is itself a means of participation in God. Dionysius speaks of hierarchy in terms of knowledge, seeing, and understanding because hierarchy is what makes this knowing, seeing, and understanding authentic. He explains that hierarchy "consists of a knowledge of beings as they really are. It consists of both the seeing and the understanding of sacred truth. . . . It consists of a feast upon that sacred vision which nourishes the intellect and which divinizes everything rising up to it. . . . [It is] a gift to ensure the salvation and divinization of every being endowed with reason and intelligence."[51]

Hierarchy is constituted by the communication of divinity, and determined by activity. Moreover, hierarchy is that which brings about salvation and divinization through communication of the divine image and power. Rorem rightly notes that for Dionysius "imitation of God presupposes a doctrine of God, or at least some stated attributes or activities of God, that are imitated by the hierarchy and its members." This again frames the hierarchy as a means of conveying divine participation through knowledge of the God who is beyond knowing.[52] In this sense while God may need to be unknown to be known, through the hierarchy God is known ecclesiologically, sacramentally, and personally in the Body of Christ. Likewise, in terms of power, the self needs to be unknown in order to be known in the image of Christ.

Although Eucharistic imagery does not prominently pervade the *Corpus Dionysiacum,* light imagery does, with the result that Christ, who is the light of God and the light of the world, is a central hierarchical focus.[53] The light referred to in the hierarchy as the divine power of God is transfigurative of and inextinguishable by the failings of humanity.[54] This "light," as the trinitarian "light from light" reflects a singular source of divine power even amidst a plethora of diverse ecclesiastical persons.[55] The light of Christ is the singular "deifying power" of the hierarchy.[56] Hierarchy in Dionysius's theorization is a perfect arrangement that is the image of God, and that communicates divine knowledge to its members, resulting in divinization.

Just as Dionysius uses a multiplicity of definitions for hierarchy, he also explains the end goal of hierarchy in several ways. Despite his seemingly diverse repetition on this topic, Dionysius consistently configures hierarchy as foremost the divinizing activity that results in the production of a human subject in communion with God. In this way Dionysius renders hierarchy as determinative of both the Christian subject and the reality by which this subject is produced. This divinizing end of hierarchy is displayed throughout the hierarchical discourses where Dionysius explains the purpose of hierarchy is "to enable beings to be as like as possible to God and to be at one with him," "our greatest likeness to a union with God is the goal of our hierarchy," and "hierarchy causes its members to be images of God in all respects, to be clear and spotless mirrors reflecting the glow of primordial light and indeed of God himself."[57] In these examples, imaging divinity and becoming like God are emphasized as the central accomplishments of hierarchy. This likeness is brought about through imitative participation in God who is the beginning, end, and maintainer of every hierarchy.[58] Dionysius makes this clear when he states that "all the hierarchic operations have this in common, to pass the light of God on to the initiates."[59] The realization of the image of God occurs by participating in the activity of God through divine communion, and this is brought about through ecclesiastical hierarchy. The hierarchy as divinizing activity, and that activity being participation in divine activity, is affirmed in Dionysius's assertion that the "common goal of every hierarchy consists of the continuous love of God and of things divine."[60] The goal of hierarchy is love, therefore the goal of hierarchy is God.[61] Dionysius conceives of God primarily in verbal form, so that divinization as the goal of hierarchy is rendered as an ever-ongoing activity.[62]

Hierarchy is synonymous with salvation for Dionysius. This close relational meaning further supports interpreting hierarchy as a divinizing dynamic rather than a fixed human structure. Dionysius admits that

> if one were to praise Salvation as being that saving force which rescues the world from the influence of evil, I would certainly accept this, since in fact Salvation takes many forms. I would only add that, basically, Salvation is that which preserves all things in their proper places without change, conflict, or collapse toward evil, that it keeps them all in peaceful and untroubled obedience to their proper laws, that it expels all inequality and interference from the world, and that it gives everything the proportion to avoid turning into its own opposite and to keep free any kind of change of state.[63]

This interpretation of salvation reflects the notion that hierarchy is flexible in form and fixed in ending achievement, flexible in content and fixed in function. By describing salvation as a "saving force" that can take many "forms," Dionysius highlights the flexibility of the hierarchy in its form and stability in its salvific content. If we read hierarchy to be synonymous with salvation, then Dionysius's elaboration that salvation "preserves all things in their proper places," and "expels all inequality," is particularly insightful about the attributes of hierarchy being descriptively focused on what hierarchy does rather than what it contains or is in its human composition.

Although the form of the hierarchy might shift to remain divinely communicative, one's place or rank in the hierarchy is not insignificant. Realization of the divinizing end of the hierarchy occurs through participating in God to the fullest extent possible in the place where God has ordained each individual to be. That is, divinization occurs in the hierarchy not by moving up the hierarchy to achieve some final end, but rather existing in one's hierarchic rank (whether it be clerical or lay) in a divinely ordained and divinely communicative way in relation to others. While Dionysius does name the various ranks of the hierarchy in terms of superiority and inferiority, nevertheless, "the same perfection or activity is analogously present throughout all the levels," so that the hierarchy is consistently divinely reflective by communicating unity and equality amidst diversity.[64] Instead of envisioning subordinates in positions of oppression, Dionysius offers a hierarchical vision wherein everything exists in a way that the divine image is radiantly manifest and divinization is possible for each of the hierarchic

participants. With a hermeneutic of inversion, Dionysius inscribes human subjectivity with a divine reality in which the production of power remains stable because he maps its origination onto God. Dionysius reiterates, "our greatest likeness to a union with God is the goal of our hierarchy," and that a hierarchy is that which has "manifested the order, the harmony and the distinction proportionate to the sacred orders within it."[65] Thus, Dionysius determines hierarchy by what it does. The hierarchy accomplishes its goal of divinization through communication of divinity to humanity and bringing humanity into communion with God, and imaging this divinity and divine activity in the created world.[66] The hierarchy produces reality and knowledge of God as it does of its authentic self.

Based on longstanding christological and trinitarian assertions and Neoplatonic foundations, order and harmony (opposed to anarchy or discord) are believed to be divine attributes. The hierarchy divinizes through a stratification of interrelated orders by each individual in his or her divinely ordained and voluntarily assumed position communicating divinity (either sacramentally or through divine likeness).[67] Hierarchy, as Dionysius constructs it, builds reality and the Christian subject as divinized precisely in the state in which they exist. The occupation of one's proper place does not refer to a social space or administrative rank, but rather to the function administered and fulfilled in that place.[68] The "hierarchic order" as the divine image, "lays it on some to be purified and on others to do the purifying, on some to receive illumination and others to cause illumination, on some to be perfected and on others to bring about perfection, each will actually imitate God in the way suitable to whatever role it has."[69] Hierarchy is not opposed to equality; rather, Dionysius constructs it as divinizing activity flowing through all humanity, and the only means for true divinely reflective equality and personal realization.[70] Dionysius's hierarchy is a powerful assertion for the church that requires acknowledgement in its social implications. At the practical level, Dionysius posits a system where the equality and sanctification of one's calling and hierarchic activity must be acknowledged by the participants. That is, in order for hierarchy to persist with theological continuity, participants must buy into the belief that the hierarchy is their means to salvation and that the exteriorly perceived inequality and subordination are in fact to its participants a means of equality and salvation. This is possible through a tradition of idealizing paradoxical power grounded in the revelation of the incarnation as an embodied inversion of power expectations. Hierarchy

even in its institutionalized form thus renders voluntary subordination as divinely reflective.

Unequivocally, the divine image determines the way ecclesiastical hierarchy appears among humanity. The ecclesiastical hierarchy brings about divinization because it is divinely given, sustained, and perfected. Dionysius explains that Jesus is the "source and the perfection of every hierarchy," so that every hierarchy has a divine origin and end that cannot be undone by humanity.[71] Through hierarchy, God divinizes by mirroring amidst humanity the divine "indivisible multiplicity" who "dwells indivisibly in every individual and who is himself undifferentiated unity with no commixture and no multiplication arising out of his presence among the many."[72] Hierarchy divinizes by communicating the unity and diversity of God in the Trinity to humanity, and forming humanity in this indivisible yet diversified image.[73] Dionysius explains that humans know God, "from the arrangement of everything, because everything is, in a sense, projected out from him, and this order possesses certain images and semblances of his divine paradigms," and subsequently make manifest the divine image through hierarchic participation.[74] This explanation reflects an ideology of divine imaging that focuses on authentic hierarchy being that which is divinely instituted and divinely reflective, precisely through its adaptation to humanity (which is also an adaptation of humanity!). For Dionysius, hierarchy is the very means by which humanity communes with divinity. God establishes the hierarchy as the authentic communication of God in the world, adapted to facilitate divine communion among humanity through kenotic relationships of unity and diversity. Not only, as Vladimir Kharlamov notes, is "the hierarchically structured universe in Pseudo-Dionysius . . . a theocentric edifice of deificational significance," but it is also the image of God in the world in a way that cannot but be an invitation for divine union.[75] Hierarchy causes its members to "be images of God in all respects" by being itself the procession, rest, and return of divinity to, and in, humanity.[76] A paradox of power is embodied in this procession, rest, and return of divinity.

Dionysius determines the human component of hierarchy by those communicating and participating in the divine image to the fullest extent possible. Both the ordained and the lay ranks of the ecclesiastical hierarchy are named according to the function they fulfill. Among the priestly ranks, Dionysius specifies triadically that deacons purify, priests illumine, and hierarchs perfect.[77] These differences of function are reflected in the

consecration rites for each rank, and are specifically explained as existing based on variations of "task."[78] The differentiation of hierarchic ranks is based on what each is charged to do in that rank rather than who is assigned to it. Identity is based on enacting an activity rather than on passive existence, so that activity rather than embodiment or intellect is foremost determinative of being a Christian subject. For Dionysius, the composition and organization of the ranks of the hierarchy are ultimately determined by fulfilling divinely ordained divinizing function. The validity of a priest's priesthood, for example, depends precisely on the fulfillment of priestly functions. Dionysius explains, "If then the rank of priests is that most able to pass on illumination, he who does not bestow illumination is thereby excluded from the priestly order and from the power reserved to the priesthood. For he is unilluminated" and ultimately "this is no priest."[79] One who does not fulfill one's hierarchic calling is not actually in the rank he (or presumably "she") appears. Authority is thus limited to the recognition of authentic mediation of and participation in divine power. Power cannot be a stagnant thing; rather, it exists in relationship and in activity. As Dionysius configures it, the only real power (in which all created power participates) is divine power. Hierarchic power in earthly terms only exists and is produced to the extent that it is given away on behalf of others to reveal and communicate God.

Among the ranks of the hierarchy, the hierarch receives special attention as being particularly God-like in the image of the divine hierarch. Dionysius explains, "talk of 'hierarch' and one is referring to a holy and inspired man, someone who understands all sacred knowledge, someone in whom an entire hierarchy is completely and perfectly known."[80] The hierarch is one who has divine knowledge and in whom this knowledge is recognized and realized in others. The naming of one as hierarch depends on his knowing God and sharing that knowledge with others. Dionysius summarizes this by explaining that "the hierarch who 'desires all men to be saved and come to knowledge of the truth' by taking on a likeness to God, proclaims the good news to all that God out of his own natural goodness is merciful to the inhabitants of the earth, and that because of his love for humanity he has deigned to come down to us and that, like a fire, has made one with himself all those capable of being divinized."[81] The hierarch is one who is like God. Dionysius describes this divine likeness in terms of the specific activities: proclaiming goodness, love, mercy, condescension, and bringing about divine union. All of these activities are ser-

vices or condescensions to the needs of others. Resultantly, the hierarch fulfills his office authoritatively by way of negating power attributed to himself. This emphasis on divine likeness as a determinative marker of spiritual authority is not new with Dionysius, but reflects a tradition found, for example, in Origen, where earthly priests participate in the unique priesthood of Christ through a sacrificial "tenor" of one's whole spiritual life.[82] With Dionysius, it is not only that this likeness has already been achieved, but much like Origen is ongoing. The hierarchic position is not determined only by possession of certain qualities, but of an ongoing activity and desire for the salvation of others that perpetually augments divine similitude.

For Dionysius, the hierarch is one who is in communion with God and brings about this communion for others. Consequently, everyone must be subordinate to the hierarch because the hierarch stands in the place of God. This place of God, however, is not just at the top of the hierarchy, but encompasses all the hierarchy within it, and is the power throughout the hierarchy. Leadership or a position of authority is a position of self-emptying through divinely imitative service and the communication of divine power. If the hierarch does not communicate divinity to others in this iconic and sacramental way, he is not a hierarch. Within the hierarchy there is no "position of power" except through divine participation and communication because Dionysius works with the fundamental assumption that all power is divine power.

The hierarch ritually stands as the source of divine communion in the sacraments, so that even if his actions outside of the liturgical setting appear to deviate from the divinized ideal, in the context of liturgy, the hierarch is the source of salvation for all the hierarchic participants in bringing forth the perfection of the sacraments.[83] Being the source, however, means giving the sacraments to others—giving away what is powerful results in participating in the power of divine likeness. Consequently, Dionysius maintains that the hierarch is one who is worthy of being obeyed because he is one who images God to others and brings them into greater divine communion through hierarchic perfection. That is not to say that there is no distinction between the hierarch and God, but rather that the activity of the hierarch and of God for Dionysius are one and the same—communicating divinity in image and sacramental substance. The activity of the hierarchy is not something other than God's activity, so therefore one who is a hierarch on earth fulfills the same function as one who is a hierarch

in heaven.[84] Arthur's observation that "Dionysius has replaced Christ with the bishop," suggests a unilateral relationship incongruous with Dionysius's theology of divine likeness. It is more accurate to add to Arthur's observation that Dionysius has also replaced the bishop with Christ.[85]

In addition to aligning the hierarch with his divine archetype, Dionysius names the activity of hierarchy as synonymous with the ecclesiastical liturgical rites. Dionysius refers to the hierarchy as "perfecting" (τελετῆς) and uses the same term to refer to the liturgical rites (μυστήριον τελετῆς), indicating that the hierarchy itself is sacramental.[86] Dionysius constructs the hierarchy not as a structure or organization that contains rites, but rather as the divinizing activity of communicating transformative divine power to the world. With this construction, the rites of the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* are not an activity of hierarchy, but the hierarchy itself. Dionysius makes this clear in the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* where he identifies the rites as the first level of the triadic ecclesiastical hierarchy. The rites are counted as hierarchy because they communicate divine power. Consequently, the rites of purification, illumination, and perfection are in fact more hierarchical than deacon, priest, and hierarch. Louth observes that this inclusion of the liturgical rites as "hierarchy" is a rather "odd characteristic" of the *Corpus Dionysiacum*, but if hierarchy is read as divinizing activity then it is actually very fitting that the acts that unequivocally divinize are hierarchically above those human hierarchic ranks that bring about sacramental participation.[87] The hierarchy perfects, and that is precisely what each of the rites does, so that the hierarchy is the perfecting activity more than any human organization. Moreover, the rites are hierarchy because they communicate divinity and thus realize divinization.[88] Dionysius's statement that "there is an abundance of sacred righteousness about the hierarchy, with its conformity to God," equally, if not more appropriately, applies to the hierarchy as rites. It is in the liturgical acts that the closest conformity to God is possible for "our" hierarchy in the Eucharistic realization of the Body of Christ.[89]

The hierarchy is constructed with such emphasis on its divinizing activity, that Dionysius conflates the divine actor of this activity with the hierarchy itself. While in many instances Dionysius speaks in such a way that it appears the hierarch or God himself is the primary actor in the hierarchy, in several instances it is the hierarchy itself that acts. Dionysius explains: "The hierarchy gives to each as he deserves and grants an appro-

priate share of the divine things to all for their salvation. It deals out its sacred gifts at the right time and in harmonious and fitting measure."[90] The hierarchy is personified as the giver of sacred gifts, and is not something other than God, but it is God's self-giving activity in the world.[91] Hierarchy is also personified in a way that clearly makes hierarchy the determiner of its own divinizing activity, so that "this hierarchy (ours) in its purity has rejected and abandoned everything of disorder, of disharmony, and of confusion."[92] The hierarchy, conceived of as the divine image, cannot be tainted by sin. Historically speaking, if one takes hierarchy to refer to the bishops and administrative institution of the church, then this statement of purity is incomprehensible—both in Dionysius's pseudo-apostolic time and his likely fifth/sixth-century historical reality.[93] If, however, one reads hierarchy as a divinizing divine dynamic that can do naught but divinize, then the hierarchy logically rejects everything foreign to divine likeness.

The ecclesiastical hierarchy is constructed as a means of mediation between heaven and earth, and as such, is adapted to the human senses. Dionysius claims hierarchy is a gift that is transmitted to humans in the scriptures because it is "suited to us, that is, by means of the variety and abundance of composite symbols."[94] Although it is true that hierarchy as a term and as an elaborate divinizing system does not explicitly originate in scripture, the concept of hierarchy as that which divinizes is scripturally grounded.[95] Dionysius explains that "the being of our hierarchy is laid down by the divinely transmitted scriptures," and that the first apostolic leaders of the ecclesiastical hierarchy "of necessity . . . made human what was divine."[96] This adaptation of hierarchy to humanity does not lessen the divinity it communicates, but rather remains an authentic source of divinization specifically in an apophatic fashion. Through all its earthly components and variety, the hierarchy communicates the image of God and incorporates humanity into it.[97] Even though, Dionysius explains, the ecclesiastical hierarchy is "adapted to what we are," the result is not that the ecclesiastical hierarchy is human in a way that it communicates human content. Instead, it is necessarily adapted to our human form so that it can communicate divinity through an ever-divinized humanity.[98] Thus, despite having many ways of defining hierarchy, Dionysius foremost theorizes ecclesiastical hierarchy as a function of humanity in communion with divinity through an ever-diverse, but ever-self-giving form.

Realizing Hierarchy in Ritual

Dionysius's description of the rites of the ecclesiastical hierarchy reveal hierarchy to be that which facilitates divinization through communicating the divine image liturgically, manifests the divine likeness through ministerial actions, and realizes the earthly hierarchy as the Body of Christ through participation and transformative contemplation. Dionysius describes rituals of baptism and anointing, synaxis (Eucharist), clerical and monastic consecration, and funeral. The rites of baptism, illumination, and Eucharist are the first and highest level of "our" hierarchy before any individual human ranks that follow secondly in their priestly progression. Although enacted by human priests and laity, the rites themselves are not man-made, but rather they are divinely originated, facilitated, and perfected.[99] The human actions in the rites are hierarchic to the extent that they fulfill and realize the divine ideal already present in the rites by virtue of their perfection by divine power. Although it is impossible to fully contextualize the liturgical rites Dionysius describes due to his historical ambiguity, insights from within Dionysius's own description of the rites in the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* illuminate the hierarchic ideal as the activity of divinization.[100]

The imagery produced by the rites is nothing other than the divine image itself. The images presented in the sacramental rites and created by the movement of its participants do not resemble the divine reality and the divine image, but rather are the realization of the divine image—the Body of Christ. This nonmimetic mode of simultaneous representation and nonrepresentation mirrors the dissimilarity and similarity of Dionysius's *Divine Names*.[101] Although one could make the case that it is human imperfections and the appropriation of the heavenly reality through perceptible symbols that make our rites dissimilar to the divine image (in an almost uncharacteristically cataphatic way), Dionysius affirms the rites positively convey divinity.[102] The hierarchy communicates something real, so that "all the hierarchic operations have this in common, to pass the light of God on to the initiates."[103] God cannot fully be expressed through symbolism or imagery, but nevertheless in the context of the liturgical rites, God is authentically communicated. Indeed, the ritual symbols depict "that which is by definition beyond all depiction," so that while the rites function in a nonmimetic mode, they are at the same time divinely imitative. This paradoxical quality permeates the entirety of the *Corpus Dionysiacum,* and

the liturgical rites are not excluded.[104] The naming of the sacraments as hierarchy shows a production of reality and symbols as having real ritual significance. It is not just a renaming of what is taking place to give a particular liturgical act theological meaning, but rather Dionysius posits a ritual interpretation about all of reality in which God is taken to be the source of all power. It is in this power that the church as the Body of Christ is realized and sacramental participation made efficacious.

The rites of the church are symbols, but convey real knowledge. Dionysius explains: "Sacred symbols are actually the perceptible tokens of the conceptual things. They show the way to them and lead to them, and the conceptual things are the source and the understanding underlying the perceptible manifestations of hierarchy."[105] Dionysius constructs the rites as symbols that are hierarchic and reveal hierarchy to be symbolic in the sense that it truly indicates the divine, but is not the divine itself. The "mysteries" are the first level of the ecclesiastical hierarchy precisely because they bring about divine communion. Baptism and Eucharist, for example, are rites of divine union, not merely rites bringing to mind divine union. Dionysius clearly states, "The perfect divine birth (baptism) joins the initiates together with the Spirit of the Deity" and "when all is done, the hierarch calls the one who has been initiated to the most sacred Eucharist and he imparts to him communion in the mysteries which will perfect him."[106] The communication of divinity occurs not only sacramentally through the efficacy of the rites, but also in the ritual context by the proper arrangement of ranks and interaction between them in the activity of the rites. For example, the hierarch can be said to "perfect" those below him because he offers them the Eucharist, and can be said to unite individuals to God in baptism. The control over the sacraments and to whom they are offered gives the ordained hierarchical ranks significant authority over the boundaries of the ecclesiastical Body and who can name themselves a part of it. The sacraments in this way hold significant power as symbols that people find determinative of their identities and existence as Christians.

God is not only communicated by the imagery created by the hierarchy but also by the activity of its participants in the hierarchical rites. The activity and movement within the liturgy provides an icon of divinized relations between participants of different ranks. In this regard, the laity are just as significant as those in the clerical ranks in communicating the living Body of Christ. The hierarch by himself could not liturgically be divinely communicative without people gathered to receive the sacraments. The

hierarch could not fulfill his rank without those below him and the laity could not fulfill their ranks without the hierarch. Moreover, prescribed variances of ritual action reflect the different function and divinizing activity of each rank. For example, the distinction between the tonsure of the monk and ordination is explained as "the fact of not kneeling, the fact that the divinely bestowed scriptures are not placed on the head, the fact of standing while the priest speaks the invocation, all this would show that the order of monks does not have the task of leading others, but that it takes its stand in its own solitary and sacred status, that it follows the clerical orders, and as attendant it is obediently uplifted by them to the divine understanding of the sacred things of their order."[107] That which is done in the ritual physically reflects hierarchy as stratified divinizing activity. Some actions, such as the kiss of peace, are shared across rites and maintain a singular significance despite the changing sacramental context. This liturgical patterning and signification makes the hierarchical ritual almost a language unto itself, one that uses imagery and sacramental performance as participatory symbols to communicate divinity.[108] The ecclesiastical hierarchy in its perfections is determined by those that actually communicate divinity—that is, the rites are only sacramental to the extent that they convey the divine image and power. Just as the hierarchy has a multitude of ranks, the hierarchic rites have levels of significance and various forms. Ultimately, however, all the rites convey a new power paradigm in which God is the origin of power and shares and manifests this power through sacramental self-giving via humble material means.

The actions of the hierarchy in liturgy are symbolically significant, because they communicate divinity through their divine origin, power, and perfection. The actions are not merely signifiers for contemplation or representation, but actually accomplish what they depict. The actions bring forth the image of God and bring humanity into divinizing communion with God. Thus, the one who is ordained as a hierarch, in the context of liturgy, is a hierarch to the extent that he performs his ritual office. Ritually he is the one who brings about divinization. A hierarch's authority comes from God in the consecration rite, and in the context of liturgical rites the hierarch acts simultaneously as himself and God, and not as himself and God. Dionysius explains in the rites, "The hierarch obeys the Spirit which is the source of every rite and which speaks by way of his words," making the hierarch in the context of liturgy a means of divine communication, and therefore an image of God.[109] Although the Holy Spirit acts

through the priest imaging the priest as divine, the priest also humbly negates this image ritually through the liturgically prescribed prayers for purification and forgiveness.[110] This tension between liturgically imaging God through priestly action and simultaneously reminding laity and clergy that this image is not God, mirrors the apophatic dynamic for which Dionysius is well known. The power of the hierarch is the power of Christ, and the hierarchy serves to reinforce this belief and make any Christian existence outside or against it impossible.[111] It is a "totalizing discourse" of power in which misrecognition, or true recognition of others and one's own situation is paramount.[112] As the human hierarch ritually acts with and iconically images God, the other ecclesiastical participants are called to interact with the hierarch as God himself. Kharlamov sees this type of institutionalized assimilation as dangerous, cautioning that the "'deification' of the episcopal status Dionysius advances could very easily lead to abuses of power."[113] The key in the Dionysian system to overcoming such danger is the recognition that the hierarch is "moved by the divinity," and the acknowledgement that, even in instances where such divine likeness is omitted, the subordinates and laity are still functioning toward the hierarch in a divinely ordained way that is salvifically divinizing for them. The concept of "abuses of power" within the hierarchy is not even imaginable for Dionysius because it is outside the realm of what hierarchy is constructed to be. Abuse of power would not be power at all in the reality Dionysius constructs. The only hierarchical power is Christ's power.

Some have alleged that Dionysius, particularly in the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* is the first among Byzantine authors to offer a liturgical commentary that leads to a type of liturgical passivity and promotes a mere contemplation of symbols enacted by the clergy in lieu of active participation in the sacramental reality brought about by them.[114] While it is true that Dionysius is a forerunner in the genre of Byzantine liturgical commentary, his interpretation does not imply that its participants are mere inactive spectators. For Dionysius, rather, the act of viewing the symbolic action of the priests implies a type of divinely participative activity and communication.[115] The hierarchy is not merely the priestly ranks acting out a dramatic representation for lay audiences, but instead the laity are essential to the ecclesiastical hierarchical triad in which they allow the higher ranks to fulfill their calling and, in so doing, are themselves perfected. Dionysius explains that the order of hierarchs "is the first and also the last, for in it the whole arrangement of the human hierarchy is fulfilled

and completed" and even the threefold arrangement of the ecclesiastical hierarchy as "the most reverend sacraments," "those inspired by God, who understand and purvey them," and "those who are sacredly initiated by these."[116] Thus the hierarchs need the laity for the fulfillment of their own divinizing function of perfecting and it is the "power" of the laity of "being enlightened in the perfected understanding of the sacred illuminations which they have been permitted to contemplate."[117] There is a reciprocity in fulfillment of the function of each rank that implies mutual dependence on other ranks for divinization and fulfillment of one's divinely given potential. It is a mutual self-giving and transfer or negation of power that empowers someone with God.

The participation and mediation between the hierarchical and lay ranks occurs not only for those living, but also those deceased. In Dionysius's description of the funeral rite, he describes the efficacy of the hierarchical liturgical actions for those subordinate to them. The Areopagite explains that the "hierarch beseeches the divine goodness to pardon the sins of the deceased and to grant him the same order and the same lot as those who have lived in conformity with God," thus suggesting that one's hierarchic participation is not static after this life, and power enacted by the hierarchy is not limited to earthly life. Dionysius goes on further to explain that indeed the prayer of the hierarch might secure a "change of condition" from what the individual had "earned during his life here" because

> the prayers of the saints in this life are extremely valuable for the one who has a longing for the sacred gifts, who has made a holy preparation to receive them, and who, knowing his own weakness, has sought out some holy man to beg him to be his helper and to join him in his prayers. Such help can only be of the greatest possible assistance to him, since it will gain for him the most divine gifts which he desires. The divine goodness will accept him because of his well-shaped disposition, because of the respect he shows for the saints, because of the praiseworthy eagerness with which he begs for those longed-for gifts, and because of the life he lives in harmony with this and in conformity to God. For one of the divine judgments has laid down that the gifts of God should be duly given to those worthy to receive them, through the mediation of those who are worthy to impart them.[118]

In a symbiotic relationship of ritual realization, the hierarch is able to fulfill his activity of "perfecting" by bringing the soul of the subordinate into

perfection. Simultaneously, the subordinate is dependent on the hierarch for this perfection, which in this example is rendered solely in a ritual context through scripted prayer. Consequently, the liturgy is a space of exchange between ranks wherein each rank is perfected in divine communication by bringing about the divinization of others.

Although Dionysius negates one's hierarchic rank unless it first reflects a divinized interior reality, in the case of the priesthood, one can still hold an ordained rank by virtue of God's activity in the hierarchy, and by fulfilling the ritual office of the rank. In his priestly function, for example, the deacon, priest, or hierarch purifies, illumines, or perfects via God's activity in the sacramental rites not one's personal interior ability to act hierarchically.[119] Thus sacramental validity does not depend on priestly purity, and priestly impurity is admitted as part of the human cooperative sacramental offering.[120] In the Dionysian schema, the rite of consecration confers the priesthood inclusive of ministerial authority and sacralizing power.[121] The holiness of the priest is significant for realizing the divine image at the individual level, but in the context of the rite with the hierarchic people the sacraments are still divinizing even if the priest is completely unhierarchic in his interior person. As Dionysius points out, "Jesus is the source and end of all hierarchies, hierarchy therefore is subordinated to him, insofar as he is God; though, as we have seen, as man, as Incarnate, he submits to the hierarchical arrangements he himself was responsible for" and a similar dynamic is present with the priests, who are ritually imaged as the divine image and subordinate to and participating in it.[122] The liturgical rite dictates that the one performing the rite "apologizes, as befits a hierarch, for being the one to undertake a sacred task so far beyond him," so that even the most Christ-like priest actually makes himself more God-like in his humble acknowledgment of his dissimilarity from God. The priest may utter blasphemies and be very much unlike Christ in his pastoral ministrations, but the sacraments may continue to authentically communicate divinity. The sacraments do this not based on the personal worthiness of the minister, but rather on the basis of the hierarchy being divine in its origin, power, and end. The power of the hierarchy is God's power in which humans participate; it is not human power.

Although Dionysius affirms the inviolability of the divinizing power of the sacraments as the highest of "our" hierarchy, the ministration of the sacraments is not completely unrelated to the minister's purity. Just as the monk Demophilus, the subject of rebuke in Dionysius's eighth letter, is

supposed to interact with the priest above him based on his divinely ordained rank rather than his own evaluation of the degree to which the priest succeeds in this office, so too the ministerial ranks are called to interact with the divinely ordained symbols in ways that appropriately recognize their superiority as divine rather than earthly realities. Although Dionysius does not directly address the possibility of sacraments' relation to human fallibility, his construction of hierarchy as foremost divine communication necessitates that the hierarchic elements are made efficacious by God Himself in spite of human shortcomings. The otherwise tense dynamic between the personal purity of the minister and the purity of the sacraments is rendered null based on Dionysius's conception of the hierarchy as that which manifests divinity. Dionysius addresses this issue of purity as he discusses the liturgical washing of the priests and hierarch's hands:

> Sacred washing was a feature of the hierarchy of the Law and this is what underlies the cleansing of the hands of the hierarch and the priests. Those who approach this most holy sacred act are obliged to be purified even from whatever last fantasies there are in their souls. They must themselves virtually match the purity of the rites they perform and in this way they will be illuminated by ever more divine visions, for those transcendent rays prefer to give off the fullness of their splendor more purely and more luminously in mirrors made in their image.[123]

The purity of the priest aids in his own illumination, but lack thereof does not negate it sacramentally for others. The personal purity of the priest can more brilliantly reflect the "splendor" of the divine image manifest in the sacramental rites, but even if not, the rites themselves are still hierarchical because they are enacted by the power of God. Dionysius emphasizes that the hierarch does not act ritually on his own accord but through divine power, explaining that the hierarch "prays then to be made more worthy to do this holy task in imitation of God. He prays that like Christ himself he might perform the divine things. He prays too that he might impart wisely and that all those taking part may do so without irreverence." The purity adopted for the ritual is ultimately not that of the ever-insufficient human hierarch, but that of the divine hierarch—Christ himself.[124]

In rites where hierarchic action cannot be separated from personal opinion, such as the ordination of individuals to the priestly ranks, or the deci-

sion to provide the funeral rite, Dionysius asserts that "it is under God's impulse that he [the hierarch] should perform these sacred rites in a way that is hierarchic and heavenly."[125] The actions of the hierarch in these ritual contexts are constructed as divinely inspired, and thus divinely communicative. The power of the ritual actions is not from the priest or hierarch himself, but rather his acting through the power of God. The power of the rites, Dionysius explains, "should not be interpreted as the hierarch's alone, but that he shares in the hierarchic power of Christ."[126] In the context of ordination, this is significant, because it elevates the decision to ordain away from the hierarch himself and situates it as recognition of divinely already-given rank. Indeed, as René Roques points out for Dionysius, "the ecclesiastical ordination is not possible without the thearchic ordination"—that is, the hierarch does not ordain without the individual already being divinely chosen, and not with any power other than divine power.[127] The possibility of ordaining someone to the priestly ranks who is not divinely selected, is ritually impossible for Dionysius because the hierarchic ordination is dependent on thearchic ordination, and the priestly power dependent on Christ's. The ritual makes visible and participates in the divine reality that already exists. It does not build a reality that then needs to be affirmed through some ritual seeking of divine confirmation. The opposite scenario of someone being thearchically ordained without hierarchic ordination is plausible, and arguably reflected in Dionysius's use of the pseudonym itself. The question of the relationship between thearchic and human recognitions of hierarchy thus leads us to the next thematic discussion of how Dionysius's hierarchy is relevant in instances of applied practice.

Hierarchy in Praxis

Dionysius's construction of hierarchy as the authentic communication of divinity enables him to successfully negotiate instances of ecclesiastical tension within the *Corpus Dionysiacum* and resolves several of the discontinuities and limitations of the hierarchic ideal. It is precisely in the moments where Dionysius addresses the problematic praxis of hierarchy that the notions of hierarchy as functionally determinative of its content and grounded in the presupposition of God as the source of all power are clearly manifest. This is not to argue that tensions within the *Corpus Dionysiacum* and its application do not exist, but only to claim that in several instances

these tensions can be ameliorated by taking Dionysius's definition of hierarchy as "activity" and as the source of and production of authentic power seriously.

According to Dionysius, the hierarchic order must be maintained even in instances of its seeming misuse and abuse. If one reads the meaning of hierarchy as that which divinizes, then even when one suspects someone else is not functioning hierarchically, according to Dionysius the former individual should continue obediently in his or her hierarchic rank. This continuation of obedience and divinizing persistence—even when it does not include correcting the perceived error of the one hierarchically superior individual—applies to ordained and laity alike. Dionysius's rebuke of the monk Demophilus in his eighth letter focuses on this tension: "It is not permitted that a priest should be corrected by the deacons, who are your superiors, nor by the monks, who are at the same level as yourself, and this is so even if it could be shown that he had violated some other regulation. Even if disorder and confusion should undermine the most divine ordinances and regulations, that still gives no right, even on God's behalf, to overturn the order which God himself has established. God is not divided against himself."[128] Thus, correction can only come from those whose hierarchic rank includes correcting those below them. Dionysius might agree, for example, that Demophilus, as a monk, and accordingly the highest rank of the laity, could correct a penitent. The monk ranks superior to the penitent and then could correct the penitent, but only to the extent that he does so in a way that reflects divine likeness within his particular rank. Dionysius restricts the subordinate from correcting a superior even when it appears that the superior is not actually such, or is abusing the office to which he is assigned. Although some might reflect on this passage as an instance of Dionysius prescribing a type of rigid and dangerous clericalism, I suggest this insistence on order is grounded in his understanding of hierarchy as the only means of divinization.[129]

In accordance with his construction of hierarchy as bringing about divinization, being divinely shaped, and his description of the hierarch as one who necessarily brings about divinization for others, Dionysius also requires complete hierarchic obedience to the rank in which God has placed each person and to their hierarchic superiors. For example, when Dionysius demands complete submission of the monk Demophilus to his priest, even amidst the possibility that the priest has misused "the sacred things," Dionysius does so with certainty that the divine end of the hierarchy will

ultimately be realized. Dionysius requires complete obedience because he constructs hierarchy as salvation. To admit the possibility of legitimate insubordination would imply that hierarchy as it is in the divine reality could be distorted and removed from its salvific end by human failings (and subsequently require human rather than divine corrections). This seemingly rigorous adherence to an idealized image of the ecclesial reality, however, reveals again the hierarchy about which Dionysius speaks to be only that which is constituted and reflective of divine power. The hierarch, for example, is the one who "obeys the Spirit which is the source of every rite and which speaks by way of his words" so that "everyone else must obey the hierarchs when they act as such, for they are inspired by God himself."[130] Instead of this obedience leading to a type of "blind clericalism," complete obedience for Dionysius is not to the cleric himself, but to the communication of God as salvation given through the hierarchy.[131] In instructing Demophilus's to obedience, Dionysius prompts him toward the emptying of self and gaining power of divinization even though Demophilus is unable to enact his desired will in the world. Dionysius requires obedience from subordinates when the hierarch is properly fulfilling his divinely given rank. Proper fulfillment of the hierarchic rank is determined by divinizing activity, because through this, the hierarchy is realized as divinely reflective.

Hierarchy, for Dionysius, is that which communicates divinity and brings about divinization. Resultantly, Demophilus voluntarily acting properly in his hierarchic rank should be sufficient to bring about his divinization even if those above or below him do not act as they should. In as much as hierarchy is corporeal in an idealized sense, it is also corporeal in recognition of the fallen nature of humanity. Those in subordinate ranks are called to act toward those above them as if they were fulfilling their ranks even when they are not. Hierarchy is divinizing activity, but it is not merely the responsibility of the higher ranks to divinize the lower, the lower ranks are hierarchic to the extent that they are divinizing in their interactions with the higher ranks as well and, together, enable each other to fulfill their divinely deigned ranks. This may seem to give those in higher positions a dangerous liberality of power over others, but the model of power the hierarchical construction Dionysius proposes is such that power is at play in each level of the hierarchy and always in service to, never "over," others.

Dionysius emphasizes that order should be maintained even if it seems that someone is doing something right by stepping beyond his or her

hierarchical position. In Dionysius's way of conceiving it, the hierarchy is ultimately divine, so to step beyond one's divinely given rank is to trespass against God.[132] The priority to act in a divine way in accordance with the rank or office God has given to each individual. Dionysius explains that

> a man who took it upon himself without the imperial permission to exercise the functions of a governor would be rightly punished. Or suppose that, when a presiding officer passed sentence of acquittal or condemnation on some defendant, one of the assistants at the tribunal had the audacity to question him (not to mention vilify). . . . This then, is what must be said whenever someone acts out of place, even when he seems to be doing something right, for no one may get out of line in this way . . . the word of God bars anyone who has taken over a task that is not for him. It teaches that everyone must remain within the order of his ministry, that only the chief priest has the right to enter the Holy of Holies.[133]

The restriction on subordinates to not correct those above them, and to relate to any misbehaving hierarchically superior individual as if he or she was fulfilling his or her divinely given rank in divinely revelatory way as the only means of divinization, is difficult to reconcile with Dionysius's affirmation that one who does not fulfill his office is not actually in that office. This judgment of an individual functioning in the hierarchy incorrectly and therefore being unhierarchical, however, is a judgment that can only be made by divinely communicative superiors and not by subordinates. This restricts someone from trespassing the hierarchy and its divinizing activity under the premise of working on God's behalf. As Arthur summarizes, "In criticizing the way a priest was carrying out his duties, Demophilus was usurping the place of the man's bishop," and "consequently was misusing his own hierarchic calling as well."[134] The order of correction within the hierarchy is clearly delineated by Dionysius, as he explains to Demophilus: "Accept the place assigned to you by the divine deacons. Let them accept what the priests have assigned to them. Let the priests accept what the hierarchs have assigned them. Let the hierarchs bow to the apostles and to the successors of the apostles. And should one of these last fail in his duty then let him be set right by his peers. In this way no order will be disturbed and each person will remain in his own order and in his own ministry."[135] Dionysius emphasizes the importance of each person persisting in his own divinely ordained hierarchical position because

it is there that the individual can be divinized.[136] The whole reality of the Christian is hence made dependent on the maintenance of the hierarchical vocation and enacting power within it. This limitation of the hierarchical system limits the self-selection and self-service of power for personal grievance or gain. It can only legitimately be used and authentically produced to bring about the salvation of others. Dionysius does not suggest ignoring the misuse of the hierarchy, but to leave its correction to those who have it within the authority of their rank to correct those below them.

It is incumbent upon each hierarchic participant to treat others in the hierarchy with regard to the calling of their rank and the ways in which they fulfill it, not the shortcomings thereof. Dionysius compares such activity to filial piety, such that if one saw a "master, an old man, or a father, harmed, attacked, and beaten up by a servant, a younger man, or a son, we would think ourselves to be lacking due respect if we did not hasten to the assistance of those of superior rank regardless of whatever prior wrong these might have done."[137] Superior rank is acknowledged based on the position God has given, not based on how the individual has fulfilled it. So while the authentic or true hierarchy as Dionysius defines it is determined by those who fulfill their rank in such a way as to communicate divinity, those who do not function properly in no way inhibit the hierarchy from fulfilling its purpose. Moreover, within the Dionysian hierarchy, people should interact with others based on their recognition of the other person's divinely given calling and potential, not the person's inabilities to fulfill his or her rank in a divinely communicative way.

Hierarchy, for Dionysius, is not an external artificial structure or order; rather, it is the divinizing center and true divine image of every being. Consequently, Dionysius reiterates that one's interior hierarchic reality should be indicative of one's external hierarchic rank and vice versa. Dionysius urges, "May reason prevail over the inferior things by virtue of its priority," which makes reason to be the hierarch of the interior person, essentially making God rule over the internal person.[138] This ideal of interior and exterior agreement is such that it almost seems too idyllic to be put into practice. For Dionysius, and those that propose a similar ideal before him, such as Ignatius of Antioch, the hierarch should be divinely reflective in a superior way to all those below him (and by virtue of his liturgical celebration and teaching, is consistently the source of divine communication in the church).[139] By reading hierarchy as activity determinative of content, the interiority and exteriority of hierarchy is itself a dynamic reflective

of the divine image. By claiming that hierarchy is that which communicates the divine and that which divinizes, hierarchy—even in the disparities between interior and exterior, earthly and heavenly realities in the Dionysian scheme—still communicates God, or it is not actually "hierarchy."[140] In instances where these hierarchic realities diverge, however, Dionysius negates the external hierarchical rank as being legitimate. Dionysius clearly sees internal spiritual fulfillment of the rank as prerequisite for external rank fulfillment. He explains: "Our blessed and God-given lawmaker proclaimed that anyone who has not put his own house in order is unfit to hold authority in the Church of God," appealing to a Pauline "hierarchic" ideal.[141] In his letter to Demophilus, Dionysius explains that one who is not an illumined and illuminating priest "dares to be like Christ and to utter over the divine symbols not anything that I would call prayers but, rather, unholy blasphemies." Such a priest is not actually like Christ, and instead tries to be like Christ by merely external function instead of external manifestation of internal reality.[142] Because the interior state of the minister is inappropriate to the function he is ranked to fulfill, he is unable to act in his position in a way that is in actuality Christ-like. This reflects the emergence of a rich theological tradition of interior spiritual knowledge becoming requisite for holding clerical positions of institutionalized ecclesiastical authority that really begins to take shape with Gregory of Nazianzus and then continues through the Byzantine period culminating in the controversy surrounding Symeon the New Theologian.[143] The hierarchic function of an individual is foremost a manifestation of an interior divine reality and divine participatory likeness constitutive of the Christian self.[144]

Based on Dionysius's definitions of hierarch and hierarchy, a charismatic is a hierarch and a hierarch a charismatic, so the possibility of a noncharismatic priestly rank is unintelligible. For Dionysius, divine knowledge is transferred through the hierarchy. There is no reason, especially based on the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, that this knowledge should be limited to that gained by "the experience of mystical rapture"; rather, it should also include (if not foremost!) "the experience of Christian liturgical worship."[145] Envisioning a charismatic and sacerdotal divide in Dionysius's writings, however, is a rejection of his construction of hierarchy as determined by divine communication. The priestly ranks have authority in Dionysius's hierarchy precisely because they have and can impart to others divinity through the sacraments. Moreover, the monastic ranks usually associated with charismatic authority are not parallel with priesthood, but are clearly

placed among the laity and under obedience to the hierarch. Louth suggests that this may have been one of the original motivators in the composition of the *Corpus Dionysiacum,* to clearly and apostolically yoke monastic spirituality to that of the ecclesiastical hierarchy as an institution.[146] The hierarchy, for Dionysius, however, is not foremost an "institution" but rather a divine reality in which authentic authority is determined by divine participation.

For Dionysius, hierarchy is constituted by divine communication, determined by divinizing activity, and ritually speaking, realized through the divine hierarch—all of which indicate that the hierarchy is divinely constituted and reflective of the divine image. Consequently, it is appropriate to observe in our discussion of the hierarchic ideal in practice a significant absence in the *Corpus Dionysiacum* of how hierarchy relates to gender and embodied sexual difference. This is noteworthy in Dionysius's application of his hierarchic ideal to practice because, despite writing in a milieu (both the pseudonymic and historical) when the female diaconate was still prominent and female monastic forms were flourishing, Dionysius does not mention how gender factors into his hierarchic design. This absence is especially surprising given Dionysius's supposed Syrian ecclesiastical background, wherein the female diaconate persisted longer than in places such as Constantinople.[147] If the realization of the divine image of God determines the hierarchy, and if women are categorically given a particular rank or excluded from particular ranks based on their exterior reality, then there is an inversion of the hierarchic ideal where the divine reality determines the hierarchic reality.[148] The omission of gender completely, however, leaves the emphasis on divinizing activity as determinative of authentic hierarchic rank intact.

There is one instance in the *Corpus Dionysiacum* that, based on the *Scholia* of John of Scythopolis, has been taken by Andrew of Crete to refer to a woman, and that is Dionysius's description of being present with the other apostles at the Dormition of Mary.[149] István Perczel suggests that this passage in fact is not a reference to Mary, but actually a con-celebration of the Eucharist and discussion of the incarnation based on non-Chalcedonian praise of the flesh of Christ.[150] If, however, we agree with the opinion of the former, and Dionysius describes the event of the Dormition, saying "many of our holy brothers met together for a vision of that mortal body, that source of life, which bore God," this does not necessarily indicate any type of hierarchical gender-based connection.[151] One could suggest that this

is because as the one who "bore God," and thus preeminently communicated God in the world, Mary is herself an image of the hierarchy perfected and not actually representative of a participant in it.[152] If, however, we read Dionysius's hierarchy as functionally determinative, then the absence of gender and indeed gender at all becomes less significant and is not taken as determinative of one's divinely realized hierarchic position. It is possible for one to make the case that whoever purifies, illumines, or perfects could be a deacon, priest, or hierarch respectively. There is the great caveat, however, with gender and with the hierarchic flexibility in general in the writings of Dionysius that the hierarchical priestly rank is determined by functioning properly therein, and the possibility of someone not functioning properly therein is admitted, but the possibility of someone functioning in a rank in which they are not recognized is not. It is conceivable that one called a hierarch is not in fact a hierarch, but it does not seem to be the case necessarily that one ranked among the laity is by virtue of his or her "perfecting" actually a hierarch—that is, until we look at the case of Dionysius himself.

By considering Dionysius's pseudonym in light of the flexible rendering of hierarchy as determined by divine communication and divinizing activity, it becomes plausible to view his writing as the hierarchical fulfillment of the rank of an apostolically appointed hierarch.[153] The historical situation, in some respects, is actually irrelevant to the discussion of the pseudonym. Hierarchy is constructed by Dionysius as functionally determinative. Consequently, Dionysius could be said to have hierarchic authority because he has knowledge of God that is believed to be true. He communicates the divine image and divinity, a way of knowing that facilitates divinization, a way that passes Christ the light, the truth, and the way to others—so therefore he could be viewed as a hierarch, even if he is not ordained. Several details from the *Corpus Dionysiacum* make later commentators do some maneuvering to maintain Dionysius's historical claims as valid, reflecting a desire to affirm the pseudonymic rank. John of Scythopolis, for example, explains that "Dionysius called Timothy his 'child,' even though Timothy was the first in the faith, because the former was older, the mentor, the more experienced in pagan learning or because we are all God's children." John of Scythopolis also "calculates that Dionysius was a young man of twenty-five when Jesus died, long before he met Paul, and an old man of ninety when he wrote to John and prophesized his release," to accommodate the address of Dionysius's tenth letter to John

the Evangelist.[154] Instead of acknowledging the problems historically with the *Corpus Dionysiacum* and its authorship, John of Scythopolis is invested in its genuineness because he finds in it something valuable—something true—so that Dionysius in conveying what John hopes to be apostolic already fulfills his hierarchic function.

The apparent problem of the pseudonym is resolved in the later Byzantine liturgical tradition by commemorating Dionysius as the bishop of Athens, the teacher of "every hierarchy," and "hierarch Dionysius."[155] This commemoration, if read through Dionysius's own construction of hierarchic rites and divinely communicative rather than human constructions, implies that Dionysius, in the divine reality, is a hierarch. The construction of power Dionysius depicts ultimately exonerates his otherwise subversive use of an apostolically powerful pseudonym. The hierarchy is limited by the temporal symbolic constraints of social and liturgical norms that can only be retrospectively affirmed as imaging divinity. If we apply the flexible rendering of hierarchy to Dionysius, then it becomes apparent that in his writing and the perfecting knowledge he offers therein, he fulfills the rank of hierarch and apostolic successor.

By taking a Pauline convert as his pseudonym, Dionysius gives himself authority from Paul (posthumously given by Dionysius's readers) and places it in his own writings to retrospectively name hierarchy as that which divinizes and, in this case, that which is the apostolic tradition. With this authority, Dionysius situates himself in an untainted hierarchic lineage—that is, what he claims about hierarchy is correct because it can be directly traced back to Christ. The pseudonym also gives Dionysius the ability, as Stang has pointed out, to incorporate Neoplatonic philosophy in an acceptable and appropriate Christian way.[156] This position allows Dionysius to offer social commentary and critique, to both proscribe and prescribe the ecclesial world around him, and ultimately make the sixth-century rituals and ranks he describes appear to be in continuity with first-century apostolic conventions. His ideal of hierarchy is not stagnant in form, but it is in validation. The hierarchy of Dionysius's day no doubt looked very different from that of Paul's time, but by situating himself in Paul's context, Dionysius is able to locate his hierarchic ideal in the apostolic tradition. Dionysius writes as the convert of Paul and bishop of Athens to found the concept of hierarchy with apostolicity. The pseudonym itself also may be a type of ultimate apophatic divinization—unknowing oneself to know and become like the ultimately unknown God who is perfectly known in

every hierarchy. Thus, Dionysius places himself at the top of the hierarchy, so to speak, in order to construct and serve it and in so doing he moves into an appropriate position to preserve the order and the image he proposes in his divinizing activity of theological writing.[157]

Conclusion

Dionysius the Areopagite offers hierarchy to Christianity as a theological symbol that is attached to fixed divine content, rendering the term flexible in its human signification. By constructing hierarchy as divinely communicative and determined by divinizing activity, Dionysius maintains hierarchy's infallible goodness and obedience to its order as a salvific necessity. Even in instances where one's superior appears to fall short of realizing the divine image, obedience and persistence in one's own rank is perceived to be divinizing. It is by fulfilling the divinely given calling of one's own rank that each individual can most fully participate in divinity and realize the image of God. Hierarchy interpreted in this way is foremost a marker of a divinely participative reality that deifies and authenticates human power and includes within it the sacraments and the clerical and lay ranks, rather than a human structure of ecclesial administration.

The ecclesiastical hierarchy communicates divinity through both iconic and sacramental participation and imaging. In the context of ritual, the liturgical movements and priestly functions bring about divine participation in the God "beyond being." The rites as icons for contemplation are constructed as participating actively in that which they represent, making both the rite and the contemplation of it hierarchical activity. The rituals manifest an already realized divine reality as available for human participation. The rite bridges the apophatic-cataphatic tension by its actors working ritually through divine power rather than their own.

Based on his construction of hierarchy as that which is constituted by the authentic communication of divinity, Dionysius affirms the impossibility of interior and exterior hierarchic realities diverging. That which is named as hierarchy is the divine reality as recognized and appropriated among humanity, and as such any type of correction to bring individuals more fully into divinizing fulfillment of their divinely appointed rank can only be done by one whose rank includes this activity. Consistent with Dionysius's apophatic emphasis, articulating exactly what authentic communication of divinity looks like is something left to be determined by

activity and by way of negation rather than positive assertion. This maneuver, while being perhaps problematic to one wishing to clearly delineate a consistent and more concrete definition of hierarchy, is appropriately left open to accommodate the God who is beyond being and thus authentically communicated by an infinite multiplicity of diverse but paradoxically united signifiers.

Additionally, based on constructing hierarchy as functionally determinative, Dionysius is able to write as a hierarch without breaking the hierarchical order he sets forth. He adopts the pseudonym as reflective of his actual hierarchic rank, one that is not recognized by his contemporaries, but that is retrospectively acknowledged as legitimate. If we read Dionysius as successfully enacting his hierarchic ideal by the practice of pseudonymic writing, then the degree to which Dionysius conceives of hierarchy as determined by divinizing activity challenges every other constructed boundary of hierarchy. Specifically, the arguably complete absence of women from the *Corpus Dionysiacum*, and the emphasis on activity as constituting hierarchy as the divine image, suggests that gender is irrelevant to determining authentic hierarchic participation and rank.

Dionysius's construction of hierarchy is more than a mere term for subsequent generations. It is the theological naming of the image of and participation in the God who is above all names. It provides the possibility of pointing to the divine reality as manifest among humanity and assuring the possibility of divinization even under the most complex ecclesiastical circumstances. Challenging to modern sensibilities and hierarchic misinterpretations, hierarchy conceived as divinizing activity and authentic communication of divine power and likeness shifts the locus of ecclesiastical identification from human to divine institution. The ability of hierarchy to fixedly point to God by flexibly reconfiguring the divinizing reality's human content and situation to remain divinizing in any situation is one of the most persistent aspects of Dionysius's hierarchic legacy.

CHAPTER

2

Maximus the Confessor and Christological Realization

Roughly a century after the *Corpus Dionysiacum* was introduced as a controversial source for theological reflection, Maximus the Confessor emerged as a significant Dionysian appropriator. In Maximus's writings there is a persistent resonance with Dionysius's underlying assumptions about legitimate power being divinely sourced and reflective, and the authoritative exercise of hierarchical offices being determined by the communication of divinity. This functionally determinative Dionysian conception of hierarchy illuminates Maximus's own theological expression and ecclesiastical self-positioning. Although Maximus hardly ever invokes the word "hierarchy" directly, he adopts the Dionysian concept of hierarchy as a theological given and expands upon its premise to facilitate his own theological maneuvering. Maximus's theology (both "lived" and written) shares affinities with the Dionysian concept of hierarchy, and the Dionysian conception of hierarchy provides an illuminating framework for interpreting Maximus's negotiation of ecclesiological legitimacy as being theologically consistent.

The details of Maximus's early life are uncertain. The two primary sources for Maximus's biographical information are a rhetorical barb-filled contemporary *Syriac Life*, and several recensions of a much-later hagiographical *Greek Life*.[1] Textual evidence from Maximus's later life in conjunction with these sources suggests Maximus was likely born in 580 in Palestine, was appointed as protosecretary in the imperial court of Heraclius, and left this post in his mid-thirties to take up the monastic life.[2] In addition to this later monastic experience, the *Syriac Life* suggests that Max-

imus's early ascetic-monastic inclination and experience was influenced by Palestinian desert asceticism through contact with Sophronius of Jerusalem (c. 560–638) and John Moschus (c. 550–619).[3] Although any reliability on the *Syriac Life* for factual historical information is very limited, one only has to look to such writings attributed to Sophronius and Moschus, such as the *Life of Mary of Egypt* and the *Spiritual Meadow,* to see how hierarchy in the ascetic hierarchical context often subverted and inverted expectations of ostensible holiness and visible positions of authority. These themes resonate in Maximus's own writings when read in a Dionysian hierarchical key.[4]

Maximus's monastic experience no doubt included a very developed stratified order of superiority, subordination, and specifically designated offices for monks to fill.[5] Maximus, however, does not write about these at all, but instead restricts himself to speaking only about the relationships between fellow monks, and the dynamic between an elder and a novice.[6] In addition to the further development of ecclesiastical and administrative monastic offices, Maximus's lifetime saw a flourishing of monastic varieties and ideals, which Maximus incorporates into his vision of hierarchy, such as obedience, service, and humility. Furthermore, the circles in which Maximus associated—the Palestinian, Greek, and North African contexts—monastic experience was generally valued as part and parcel of spiritual and theological authority.[7] Therefore, for Maximus, the ascetic life and the theological life were in Dionysian terms the hierarchical life. In them, even more so than with Dionysius, the ideal manifestation of the divine image (and recognition of divine power) could be represented corporeally and with unified self-emptying diversity.

The ritual context Maximus describes, particularly in his *Mystagogy,* is presumably Constantinopolitan, and at the same time mirrors in some ways the description given by Dionysius.[8] Again, this description is overly simplistic compared to the architectural and ritual realities of his day, and perhaps this is in order to highlight the distinctions that are significant to making his theological points. Presumably, Maximus would have had knowledge of Latin liturgies, as well as possibly the Sabbaite rites of Jerusalem, so the reasons for Maximus giving his readers a minimal outline of the liturgy and the clerical hierarchy in his *Mystagogy* are left to speculation.[9] It may be the case that the elements he mentions are the ones he found to be the most significant and worthy of contemplation, and those he omits he considered more akin to "*adiaphora,*" being perhaps merely

humanly constructed and therefore inconsequential to the realization of the church as the Body of Christ.[10] It seems unlikely that there would be anything inconsequential to the realization of God among humanity, however, so it may rather be the case that Maximus limited himself to that which was the most universal. Regardless, the visible historical ecclesiastical and ritual reality is undoubtedly more complex than the spiritualized description Maximus offers, but his simplification serves to focus his reader's attention on contemplating with greater profundity the mysteries of divine communication to humanity.

Admittedly, Maximus's own writings focus little on the details of hierarchy explicitly. By the seventh century, the ecclesiastical orders and hierarchical structures of the church were rather developed, and Maximus's writings offer both practical advice to issues of spiritual authority (primarily in the monastic context), as well as contemplation on the orders and physical structures of the church for spiritual significance and indication of spiritual pedagogy. It seems, as Paul Rorem suggests, that Maximus does not spend much time discussing the meaning of the term hierarchy because he "accept[ed] the new word as a matter of course."[11] Already by Maximus's time, hierarchy had been powerfully inscribed into the reality and symbolic linguistic realm of meaning-making at his disposal. In his writings Maximus primarily refers to the bishop, the high priest (Christ), and monks while not naming numerous other orders such as deacon, reader, subdeacon, acolyte, doorkeeper, etc. that filled the churches of Constantinople during his lifetime.[12] Moreover, although the hierarchy of Maximus's day was predominantly male, Maximus does attend to the category of gender in his theological writings, more so than other Byzantine authors. During his life, the office of the deaconess continued to exist, significantly powerful women in the ascetic and monastic life were increasing in number, imperial women preceding this time—especially Pulcheria (d. 453) and Theodora (d. 548)—wielded formidable power over ecclesiastical authorities and were given significant liturgical commemoration, veneration for women saints and female subjects for hagiography was burgeoning, and the cult of the *Theotokos* continued to experience triumphal expansion. These examples of prominent female spiritual influence perhaps contributed to Maximus's hierarchical vision as being more complex and ultimately united (instead of divided) by all forms of lived difference, including gender, than the *Corpus Dionysiacum*.[13]

Maximus's writings display direct citation of, and engagement with, Dionysius so that more than a measure of tacit agreement with the *Corpus Dionysiacum* can be assumed even in places where Maximus does not engage Dionysius directly. It is important to note that the version of the *Corpus Dionysiacum* with which Maximus was likely familiar was the Greek version heavily redacted by John of Scythopolis. Accordingly, with Maximus's citations of Dionysius, one must keep in mind again that any "real" access to the historical figure writing as Dionysius the Areopagite is impossible.[14] Dionysius was first introduced on the theological scene as a questionably authoritative source in the sixth-century controversial christological context.[15] It is in this context that Maximus first found him to be authoritative, albeit not without need for clarifying (and sometimes creative) interpretation to affirm him as part of the "orthodox" apostolic lineage.[16] Although some have claimed that Maximus offers Dionysius a much-needed christological corrective, a claim that has recently been countered on numerous fronts (notably by Golitzin) and is generally perceived to be a misreading of Dionysius, the critique is not completely inaccurate. Dionysius is indeed christologically ambiguous (having been claimed by numerous christological camps), while Maximus essentially defines the orthodox diothelite position for later tradition.[17] Maximus clearly reads Dionysius as a fellow and sainted Christian, having authority due to his theological insight even if Maximus then uses the *Corpus Dionysiacum* as a springboard for his own seemingly divergent theological interpretations.[18] Maximus nowhere calls Dionysius out on being either pseudonymous or theologically problematic; rather, he cites and interprets him much in the same way he does other patristic authors such as Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus.[19] Even though Maximus's hierarchical thought is in agreement with the most central components of Dionysius's vision, this does not necessarily indicate a causal relation. Although Maximus does cite Dionysius's writings on hierarchy, and cites him as authoritative, it may very well be the case that Maximus's writings are more influenced in their development through his own experience and his reading of other theological and scriptural texts, so that what I suggest in this chapter is affinity in theological conception of hierarchy rather than a reception history.

The theological controversies most prominent in Maximus's lifetime are christological. Consequently, nearly all of Maximus's writings and their cosmological centricity are significantly oriented by christological concerns.[20]

Maximus's Christology develops with precision in response to the monothelite controversy so that the christological themes in his earlier works (before 630) may not be reliably consistent with his later works. At the same time, however, it is also unreasonable to assume that even these works have no underlying christological concerns in the ways they are articulated. Even without the emergence of the monothelite controversy, no doubt the lingering of the Fifth Ecumenical Council and tensions continuing from Chalcedon, made christological reflection central in any spiritual and theological work. Accordingly, even his earlier works such as the *Four Centuries on Charity*, the *Ascetic Life*, and the *Mystagogy,* which do not overtly address christological concerns (at least in the same way that his *Ambigua* do) and fall chronologically before the monothelite controversy, can still be oriented by doctrinal interests to express Orthodoxy.[21]

Maximus's christocentricism is the focus around which all his hierarchical interpretations take place. Indeed, even his recurring Neoplatonic themes of order, unity, virtue, and goodness can be read christologically in light of the Christian appropriators Maximus cites (such as the Cappadocians) rather than the Neoplatonist authors directly.[22] Even though Maximus was acquainted with the original philosophical sources, by his time it is hard to imagine Maximus reading these sources through anything else but a distinctly Christian interpretive lens colored by centuries of doctrinal discourse. In Maximus's writings, theological parallels, ritual explanations, and practical situations that are reflective of Dionysian hierarchy are consistently christologically founded. Maximus's conception of hierarchy in the Dionysian sense of realizing and manifesting the truth of the divine likeness among humanity through divinized relations of power is foremost expressed in the diothelite person of Christ. Specifically for Maximus, the divine likeness evident through relations producing power must be consistent with united but unconfused "orthodox" christological constructions because "the holy church . . . is the figure and image of God inasmuch as through it he effects in his infinite power and wisdom an unconfused unity from the various essences of beings."[23] This theological theorization is grounded in Maximus's location of power with the person of Christ, so that those who do not reflect correct confession of faith regarding Christ cannot have access to His power or mediate it with authority. Similarly, the reality constructed by those who are ostensibly in ecclesiastical power is rejected by Maximus based on doctrinal difference.

Maximus subverts, relocates, and redefines the highest spiritual and political authorities of his milieu based on their christological formulations. At first glance, it may seem that Maximus is very antihierarchical in that he rarely uses the term hierarchy, and in many historical instances seems to run counter to the dictates of established hierarchical authorities to whom he ostensibly should have been submissive.[24] This makes him an even more remarkable and interesting inheritor of Dionysius's hierarchic framework. Maximus is one of the most prominent seventh-century opponents of the Constantinopolitan hierarchy and is therefore a fascinating example of a theologian whose thought is permeated by affinity to the foundational claims shaping Dionysius's hierarchic theological ideal. By prioritizing communication of divinity and divine reflectivity as determiners of authority and potency, Maximus appropriates and extends the Dionysian hierarchical theology to rebuke the ecclesiastical and imperial administration rebuking him. With the rise of the monothelite controversy, Maximus came into conflict with the patriarch of Constantinople and essentially refused communion with one of the (if not the) highest-ranking ecclesiastical hierarchies of his time. Moreover, while in exile he located authentic hierarchy in Rome, and rejected his former geographic and imperial ecclesiastical superiors in Constantinople. Somewhat circuitously despite this rejection, Maximus, shortly after his death, is held historically and hagiographically as a defender and sainted pride of the hierarchy he once rejected. Thus, Maximus's life indicates at least three significant hierarchical contexts: the imperial, the monastic, and the clerical. These contexts no doubt shaped Maximus's hierarchic views, and led to the acceptance and adapting of the Dionysian concept of hierarchy as a functionally (and for Maximus then consequentially a faith-based) determinative activity. For Maximus, the power of the hierarchy (not just the authority of it) was lost with the confession of a compromising christological doctrine because the activity of the hierarchy to communicate and reflect God was rendered impossible.

Despite the fact that Maximus was not a hierarch in the clerical sense, from a relatively early age, he was asked to give theological opinions in both the Eastern and Western parts of the Christian empire. This suggests that in the domain of theology, Maximus carried greater authority than many of the hierarchs themselves. Although Maximus was not a priest and probably not even an abbot, after his death he is remembered hymnographically

as a "guide of Orthodoxy" and "luminary of the world." If viewed through a Dionysian lens, these appellations situate Maximus commemoratively at the hierarchical heights.[25] Indeed, even as a monk ranked among the laity, Maximus was able to rebuke and define the hierarchy of his time in a way that is deemed authoritative by later Orthodox tradition. Accordingly, he is retrospectively, and hagiographically, viewed by this tradition as a defender of the faith rather than as one who rejected the ecclesiastical and imperial authorities of his own day.[26]

Hierarchy in Theory

In Maximus's writings, the term "hierarchy" does not appear at all beyond the direct Dionysian reference to the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*. Maximus makes similarly minimal use of the term "hierarch" to refer to the presiding bishop.[27] This notable lack in Maximus's writings could be reflective of a number of hypothetical situations. Perhaps the term was not yet so familiar to Maximus in a Christian context that he preferred other terminology, or perhaps he saw the term as being rather inconsequential to his overall interpretation of the significance of the *Corpus Dionysiacum*. Indeed, one could make the case that Maximus may not appropriate the Dionysian concept of hierarchy at all. If dependence on Dionysius cannot be definitively shown in regard to the term of hierarchy, however, what can be shown is a theological similarity of ideas between what Dionysius names as hierarchy and the ways Maximus negotiates issues of authority, order, and divine communication based on shared assumptions of power as kenotic and thearchical. The persistence and similarity with how these two authors maintain the necessity of unity and diversity, divine order, and divine-human communion reflects a common conception of all legitimate power as participative in divine power.[28] In Maximus's theological writings it is clear that although his use of the term hierarchy is limited, he makes great use of the theological ideals signified by the Dionysian term hierarchy.[29]

Maximus, like Dionysius, defines one's hierarchic ecclesiastical office in terms of fulfilling the function of that rank in such a way that exemplifies and participates in the divine self-giving power. He repeatedly defines a "monk" as one who has "renounced," and has "separated" himself from worldly things and devoted himself to God.[30] The authenticity of monastic life is not determined by tonsure or habit, but by activity consistent with

the vocation. Maximus points out that external appearance of monastic rank does not equate with monastic hierarchic reality by explicitly naming those (and in the trope of humility even himself) individuals in whom there is disconnect between interior and exterior realities "would-be monks" (τοὺς δῆθεν μοναχούς).[31] One is a monk only to the extent that one fulfills the activities of the monastic rank in a divinely imitative, revelatory, and communicative way. Maximus explains that "he who has renounced things, as women, money, and the like, makes a monk of the outer man, but not yet of the inner man, that is, of the mind. It is easy to make a monk of the outer man, if only one wants to; but it is no little struggle to make a monk of the inner man."[32] There can be, and presumably is, a great deal of distinction between the ranks and orders perceived at the visible level and the invisible reality of one's hierarchic fulfillment.

The fact that Maximus includes himself, or at least the elder in the *Ascetic Life's* dialogue, as falling short of the monastic rank in actuality suggests that the end of hierarchy or fulfillment of one's ecclesiastical calling is precisely in the activity of the hierarchy ever being realized.[33] This suggests that there is a paradoxical unity and discontinuity between the ranks' ideals and the possibility of ever fully realizing them in this life. This dynamic is reminiscent of Gregory of Nyssa's *epektasis* in the *Life of Moses*—where the experience of God is precisely the activity of ever straining forward for more and more divine experience. Paul Blowers has convincingly demonstrated that Maximus, in contrast to Gregory of Nyssa, affirms the possibility of an ending stasis, but nuances that this stasis is simultaneously a "moving repose" and a "stationary movement."[34] The term "monk," then, refers to those participating in the divine activity appropriate to monks through ongoing fulfillment. Maximus makes this more explicit in the *Mystagogy*, where he states that all the saints "will be called sons of God to the extent that . . . they will have radiantly and gloriously brightened themselves through the virtues with the divine beauty of goodness." Even the saints (οἱ ἅγιοι), are determined by the activity of transformation through divine likeness and participation.[35] One's rank is realized only in so much as one reflects the divine potential, or the λόγος within it. Maximus's emphasis on realizing one's λόγος through communion with the divine λόγος is essentially founded on the same constitutive theological elements as Dionysius's hierarchy—if we take it to be divinizing activity. Through the hierarchy, one manifests the divine image within oneself in divine likeness through greater and greater divine participation.[36]

Maximus further explains this function-fulfilling flexibility of the hierarchy—mirroring the Dionysian hierarchically identified triad of purification, illumination, and perfection with deacon, priest, and hierarch. Maximus explains that "he who anoints his mind for the sacred contests and drives bad thoughts from it has the characteristics (λόγον) of a deacon; of a priest, however, if he illumines it with knowledge of beings and utterly destroys counterfeit knowledge; of a bishop, finally, if he perfects it with the sacred myrrh of knowledge of the worshipful and Holy Trinity."[37] The priestly offices like that of the monastic office are defined in content by the fulfillment of their divinely established office—an office that makes humanity in the divine image (both sacramentally through conferring such rites as baptism and Eucharist, and iconographically by imaging divine relations and power through visible liturgical service). What is translated as "characteristics" in the aforementioned quote is in fact "λόγον," which does not imply a subject has the characteristics of one thing while in truth actually being something else. Maximus's λόγος expresses a relational mirror with his christological understanding that "the world and God should both exist and be thought of in togetherness with and distinction from each other, but without confusion and without separation."[38] For Maximus, a deacon, priest, and bishop are deacon, priest, and bishop precisely because they fulfill the divinely given functions of deacon, priest, or bishop in such a way as the image of God is revealed and divinization is made possible—which for Maximus is only possible through the confession of orthodox faith.[39]

The realization of one's authentic hierarchic rank at any level (even among the laity) is determined by one's functioning in that divinely given position in a divinely imitative way (that is, fulfilling one's λόγος in the divine λόγος).[40] Maximus affirms that each individual has the potential to realize this divine reflectivity and mediate the singular divine power by explaining "that the one *Logos* is many *logoi* and the many *logoi* are one because the One goes forth out of goodness into individual being, creating and preserving them, the One is many."[41] In Neoplatonic and Dionysian fashion, Maximus presents a divine procession and a divinizing return where, "the many are directed toward the One and are providentially guided in that direction," in a way that encompasses all human beings.[42] Maximus's characterization of the movement between the λόγος and the λόγοι is reflective of Dionysius's movement within the hierarchy and the hierarchic multiplicity that is paradoxically a divinely reflective unity through

participation.[43] By use of λόγος terminology, Maximus frames the hierarchic discourse in christological language, but still reflects the fixed divinizing hierarchic Dionysian ideal beyond referring just to the ordained priestly ranks.[44]

Specific to the priestly ranks, however, Maximus emphasizes that a hierarch must provide the ecclesial participants an icon of Christ in his person as divinizing activity for fulfillment of his own rank and others. In his thirtieth epistle, Maximus urges the bishop whom he addresses "to bear the image of God on earth" on the basis of his episcopal consecration.[45] This is fundamentally a reframing of the hierarchical function of "perfecting" that is constitutive of what it means to be a bishop in terms of iconic divine communication. Accordingly, priestly ranks for Maximus are interpreted primarily in light of divinizing function of communicating God to the world in sacrament and image.[46] If one fails to convey the correct divine image (i.e., one that is consistent with and reflective of the orthodox confession of faith) or function in such a way as to facilitate divinization by cooperation with God's activity in the world, then that one is not actually in the position they think they are. Likewise, there is flexibility in one's position to ascend based on activity. Maximus explains that "the one who is an apostle and a disciple is also completely a believer. But the one who is a disciple is not wholly an apostle, but is wholly a believer. The one who is only a simple believer is neither disciple nor apostle. Still, by his manner of life and contemplation, the third can be moved to the rank of dignity of the second, and the second to the rank of dignity of the first."[47] The office is still not open to those below, in terms of liturgical function, but the rank and dignity are transferable. Thus, Maximus reflects Dionysian hierarchy as not limited to those with tonsure or ordination, and those with tonsure and ordination still must fulfill their priestly or monastic λόγος in order to be properly ranked as such.

The exclusivity of particular ranks is grounded in the divinely given potential of each individual and their divinely cooperative fulfillment of that calling. Consequently, despite the debated attribution of authorship of the *Life of the Virgin Mary* to Maximus being provocatively argued by Stephen Shoemaker and critically rejected by Phil Booth, the text does provide an interesting test case for exploring the boundaries of hierarchic situation with regard to gender.[48] Depending on where one aligns oneself in the debate on its authorship, the relevance of this text ranges from providing insight to Maximus's hierarchic application for female characters

to at the very least providing an additional (non-Maximian) instance of Dionysian resonances in terms of hierarchic function and determination. In this text, the author implements a Dionysian hierarchic dynamic to negotiate the seemingly problematic disorder of gender in the Byzantine manifestation that at the head of the ecclesiastical and celestial hierarchies, or more precisely outside and above it, is a female-bodied woman—the *Theotokos*.[49] The author characterizes Mary as the primary hierarch of the first Christian community after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. Mary can be called the minister and leader of the congregation because she is one who is deified.[50] After the ascension she is said to be "the model and leader of every good activity for men and women through the grace and support of her glorious king and son." Much like a Dionysian hierarch, Mary is the leader of goodness on earth in communion with divine goodness.[51] Likewise, she is a teacher who "instructed the holy apostles in fasting and prayer" and the one who "sends forth the other disciples to preach to those far and near."[52] Mary is further depicted as the highest earthly being after the ascension, because, as the author notes, "It is well known and recognized that, as she remained after her son and king as steward on his behalf and teacher and queen of the believers and those who hope in his name, men and women, his friends and disciples, so she had care and concern for them all. And the eyes of all hoped in her and they saw living among humanity in the place of the bodily Lord Jesus Christ his immaculate and most blessed mother who gave birth to him according to the flesh."[53] The author extends Mary's authority not only in general ways over all the believers, but also specifically over the apostles, who are considered at the rank of hierarchs (at least in the Dionysian system), so that Mary is even above the first hierarchs appointed by Christ. The author validates this point as he says that "she was not only an inspiration and a teacher of endurance and ministry to the blessed apostles and the other believers, she was also a co-minister with the disciples of the Lord. She helped with the preaching, and she shared mentally in their struggles and torments and imprisonments."[54] Mary thus appears as simultaneously above the apostles as a teacher and an equal with them in the ministry and sufferings, which communicate divine likeness. Mary's present-day Byzantine and Orthodox liturgical commemorations as "more honorable than the Cherubim and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim," setting her above the celestial (and consequently the ecclesiastical) hierarchy, corroborates the author's application of the

Dionysian ideal in his Marian hagiography as persistent in the broader conception of the Byzantine theological tradition.[55] Mary stands beyond the hierarchy because her role is ultimately beyond the hierarchy in the sense of order, but she is also ultimately the most hierarchic in her divinized and divinely communicative life of service.[56] Consequently, the question of sexual difference and hierarchical order is rendered such that in divinization sexual difference may provide a means to divinization but is not limited by it.

One of the Maximus's more certainly attributable writings with regard to hierarchy, *Ambiguum 41,* also provides space for considering the relationship between traditionally exclusionary characteristics (such as sex) and fulfillment of various hierarchic ranks. In this short "difficulty," hierarchy conceived of as stratified ranks based on difference appears to ultimately dissolve concerning sexual differentiation in the ascent of the human person from division to unity. He explains that "in order to bring about the union of everything with God as its cause, the human person begins first of all with its own division and then, ascending through the intermediate steps by order and rank, it reaches the end of its high ascent, which passes through all things in search of unity, to God, in whom there is no division."[57] This type of unity is reflective of the Dionysian concept of hierarchy, wherein divine unity is attained precisely through the order and ranks established among creation.[58] For Maximus, these distinctions ultimately disappear as a means of division and the human person accomplishes this unity

> by shaking off every natural property of sexual differentiation into male and female by the most dispassionate relationship to divine virtue. This sexual differentiation clearly depends in no way on the primordial reason behind the divine purpose concerning human generation. Thus it is shown to be and becomes simply a human person in accordance with the divine purpose, no longer divided by being called male or female. It is no longer separated as it now is into parts, and it achieves this through the perfect knowledge, as I said, of its own *logos*, in accordance with which it is.[59]

The division of the sexes is based in human generation not in virtue, so that by union with virtue and knowledge of one's own λόγος the division of ranks, or rather the patriarchal order of the sexes as it would have been perceived in Maximus's day, is overcome. Indeed, the embodied sexual

differences cannot be made to "cease to exist," but they can be brought to no impeding effect regarding one's salvation even though they may be a humanly adopted means of achieving or expressing salvation.[60] Despite sexual differences "each human being and humanity as a whole are, according to Maximus's philosophical principles, vested by God with this equality of honor and dignity," so that diversity as divisiveness is overcome by divine participation.[61] The laity and priesthood, male and female, all have the same potential honor and dignity in fulfilling their hierarchical activity in God. The most basic and patriarchal hierarchic structure assumed to be adopted by Christian theology, that of male being primary and thus superior in rank to female, is made insignificant by Maximus in comparison to the realization of one's divine end through virtue.[62] This construction of divine likeness in unity and virtue suggests the distinction of human generation is irrelevant for determining hierarchical rank except to the extent that it is a potential means for the fulfillment of one's realization as the image of God.[63]

Distinction of virtue supersedes that of sexual distinctions, but in a paradoxically Dionysian way, even this type of rank and order in no way implies either a disparity in the love of God, or the love humans should have toward individuals in various ranks of virtuous progress. Even though there is an order of ascent through virtue to divine unity, according to Maximus, the "perfect charity" both of God and of men though God "loves all men equally," and "does not split up the one nature of men according to their various dispositions."[64] Moreover, this passage gives the theoretical basis for Maximus's practical application of Dionysian hierarchy in his own context. All humans should be loved equally so that "perfect charity" is "always looking to that (divine) nature, loves all men equally, the zealous as friends; the bad as enemies. It does them good and is patient and puts up with the things they do. It reckons no evil at all but suffers for them, if opportunity offers, in order that it may even make them friends, if possible; if not, it does not fall away from its own intention as it always manifests the fruits of equal charity for all men."[65] Each person is called to respond to others in the hierarchy in a way that is consistent with knowledge and fulfillment of their own λόγος and the perfect love of God. Consequently, even those not properly fulfilling their λόγος and therefore the "enemies" of perfect charity (the ones not functioning hierarchically), do not provide for those around them an excuse to deviate from fulfilling their own λόγος and union with God. Essentially, "perfect charity" of the church

is not diminished by those who oppose it, but rather provides opportunity continually for its realization—the realization of God in the church.

For Maximus, what distinguishes human beings is secondary to what unites humanity, and the means of uniting humanity is the communication of divinity. The very sources of distinction (each individual's λόγος), when realized and virtuously fulfilled, become the very sources of union with each other and God. He explains:

> Then, by a way of life proper and fitting to Saints, the human person unites paradise and the inhabited world to make one earth, no longer is it experienced as divided according to the difference of its parts, but rather as gathered together, since no introduction at all of partition is allowed. Then, through a life identical in every way through virtue with that of the angels, so far as is possible to human beings, the human person unites heaven and earth, making the whole of creation perceived through the senses one with itself and undivided, not dividing it spatially. . . . The human person unites the created nature with the uncreated through love (O the wonder of God's love for us human beings!), showing them to be one and the same through the possession of grace, the whole [creation] wholly interpenetrated by God.[66]

Again, it is God who does the uniting and interpenetration, which for Maximus, at least bearing in mind his christological concerns, would in no way imply confusion or dissolution of natures, but rather a true unity of unconfused diversity—a realization of God himself as Trinity and the divine λόγος incarnate.[67] This unity and diversity without confusion or dissolution is a unity manifested through self-giving and diversity empowered through mutual participation in divine power that gives itself away rather than divisive self-will and seeking.[68] These attributes mark the authentic realization of the Christian community as the Body of Christ.

Maximus unites distinct realities and distinct individuals in the Body of Christ in way that mirrors his christological interpretations. In this sense, the church as the ecclesiastical hierarchy is the communication of the authentic and specifically diothelite Body of Christ among humanity. The ecclesiastical hierarchy has one ultimate christological identity, so that "the holy Church of God is an image of God because it realizes the same union of the faithful with God. . . . God realizes this union among the natures of things without confusing them but in lessening and bringing together their distinction, as was shown, in a relationship and union with himself

as cause, principle, and end."[69] Maximus identifies the church as the ecclesiastical hierarchy, in a way that is reminiscent of Dionysius's hierarchical construction. The church for Maximus is more of an activity of realizing christological identity of being the Body of Christ than a place.[70] Maximus emphasizes the church is where particularity is transcended, but not abolished, to reveal a divine reality. The particularity is deified by being brought into divine communion and accordingly brought to fulfillment of its divinely designed end. The particularities Maximus lists as existing as distinct but yet unified in the church are vast, as he claims "almost infinite number are the men, women, and children who are distinct from one another and vastly different by birth and appearance, by nationality and language, by customs and age, by opinions and skills, by manners and habits, by pursuits and studies, and still again by reputation, fortune, characteristics, and connections," but by spiritual rebirth "all in equal measure it [the church] gives and bestows one divine form and designation, to be Christ's and to carry his name."[71] The particularities are elided by a divine unity. Accordingly, the church as hierarchy transcends difference in an ever-active unity manifesting the divine image of Christ.

Realizing Hierarchy in Ritual

Maximus may employ alternate language when compared to Dionysius's use of the term "hierarchy," but he consistently relies on a similar conception of power production through christological imitation and hierarchical relationality as the means of communicating divinity in his description of the church. In his *Mystagogy* Maximus states: "The holy Church of God is an image of God because it realizes the same union of the faithful with God," and "God realizes this union among the natures of things without confusing them but in lessening and bringing together their distinction, as was shown, in a relationship and union with himself as cause, principle, and end."[72] The divine origin, principle, and end of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the hierarchy as an image of God, and the hierarchy as a divinizing activity—arguably the three most important aspects of Dionysian hierarchy, Maximus identifies with the Church of God. The union of the faithful with God through the church is compared to the hypostatic union, with divine power being the same and bringing about the same unitive end in both. In this church, Maximus emphasizes that unity overcomes individual particularities but does not "dissolve" or "destroy" them; rather, it

"transcends" and "reveals" particularity as the "whole reveals its parts."[73] It is in union with others through divinely imitative self-giving that one's true particularities are revealed as divinely ordered and perfected. In the church as in God himself, there is rank without distinction, union without confusion, and divinizing oneness with hierarchic stratified multiplicity.[74]

Maximus explains that the church is the "figure and image of God" because through the church, God makes a unity of diversity without creating confusion or dissolving the unique characteristics of each person. For Maximus, God

> effects in his infinite power and wisdom an unconfused unity from the various essences of beings, attaching them to himself as a creator at their highest point, and this operates according to the grace of faith for the faithful, joining them all to each other in one form according to a single grace and calling of faith, the active and virtuous ones in a single identity of will, the contemplative and Gnostic ones in an unbroken and undivided concord as well. It is a figure of both the spiritual and sensible world, with the sanctuary as a symbol of the intelligible world and the nave as a symbol of the world of sense.[75]

Maximus stratifies the church and the person into a hierarchy that is simultaneously participative in christological unity. He further explains that the church "is as well an image of man inasmuch as it represents the soul by the sanctuary and suggests the body by the nave. Also, it is a figure and image of the soul considered in itself because by the sanctuary it bears the glory of the contemplative element and by the nave the ornament of the active part."[76] Although there are tripartite parts to the church, the man, and the soul, for Maximus these parts precisely find the realization of their God-given potential in the properly ordered fulfillment and communion with the other divinely ordered parts. One cannot enter the sanctuary without first coming through the nave, and the nave as the entrance to the church does not lack valid and divinely facilitating function—a validation that reinforces hierarchy as in no way diminutive to the lesser parts or the differences that are surpassed in ascent and unity.[77]

Although Maximus repeatedly affirms the content of Dionysius's *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, he provides additional commentary on the liturgical context and activity to assert his own emphasis on the liturgical-theological reality (as *the* reality).[78] This Dionysian endorsement and simultaneous adaptation is Maximus's appropriation and interpretation of the Dionysian

hierarchy. One notable omission from the *Mystagogy*, when compared to the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, is the explicit mention of various, or at least the three priestly hierarchic, ranks. Indeed, Maximus does refer to the "bishop" descriptively, but he omits mention of the priest or deacon, tending to focus on Christ as the hierarch instead.[79] Although this may be due to his stated aim to not repeat what was said by Dionysius, it may also be a reframing of the liturgical action in terms of its divine power and energy. This does not indicate that the priestly ranks are insignificant, but rather that they are in perfect union with the high priest—Christ himself—to the extent that they do not have any independent will or activity deviating from that of Christ in the context of the liturgy. Priests only have power from Christ. By aligning all power with divine power, Maximus renders any ecclesiastical structure not in orthodox communion as sacramentally powerless and without any authority. One might venture a christological comparison in this regard wherein Christ's humanity is fully present but completely in union with and therefore in submission to his divinity in all things.[80] Given the liturgical context of Maximus's day, perhaps while he writes that the bishop "figures and images" the activity of Christ, what he actually is reminding his readers is that Christ is acting in a way to reveal the bishop in his proper and most christological function.[81] An audience familiar with the liturgy would not necessarily need to be reminded of the hierarchical movement and clerical ranks present in liturgy, but an interpretation of how these actions have salvific and divinely revelatory significance, and how they are ultimately brought about by Christ himself, would be important as an affirmation of the hierarchy as a mediation of divine power.

One example of emphasizing the divine activity of the liturgy is in Maximus's discussion of the Eucharist. In this discussion, the Eucharist "transforms into itself and renders similar to the causal good by grace and participation those who worthily share in it" so that the emphasis is on the transformative activity of the Eucharist among all its participants—the majority of which would likely have been laity.[82] The means of distribution of the sacrament and its transformation via priestly activity is notably absent. For those reading the *Mystagogy*, however, it is perhaps intended to be an emphatic corrective to a type of thinking that the sacrament depends on the priests' personal activity in any way.[83] By omitting mention of the priestly distribution of the sacrament and instead showing ritual function in union with divine energy and activity, Maximus maps divine activity

onto what already is acknowledged visibly by his readers to be human. There is no need to state the obvious and apparent, but what is necessary is to redirect his readers' thinking about who brings about sacramental completion and the divine mysteries—God himself.[84] This way of figuring the liturgy reveals the Dionysian hierarchical concept because it is more clearly the communication of divinity and the realization of the divine image among humanity. This divinizing link is made explicit where Maximus further notes that by partaking in the sacrament, the communicants "can be and are called gods by adoption through grace because all of God entirely fills them and leaves no part of them empty of his presence."[85] The hierarchical function in a Dionysian sense is here complete when the participant is filled with divine power through divine presence. God is made manifest and God's presence is realized to the fullest extent possible through participation in the otherwise earthly activity of offering and eating food. This is made apparent by the perception and in the intentional (and then later internalized) misrecognition of any earthly power as divine, and any recognized authority as divinely reflective.

Throughout his liturgical contemplations, Maximus gives specific hierarchical movements in the liturgy christological interpretation, which brings about divine participation and contemplation for the ritual participants. For example, Maximus explains that "the first entrance of the bishop into the holy Church for the sacred synaxis is a figure of the first appearance in the flesh of Jesus Christ the son of God and our Savior in this world. . . . After this appearance, his ascension into heaven and return to the heavenly throne are symbolically figured in the bishop's entrance into the sanctuary and ascent to the priestly throne."[86] Maximus's use of "symbol" and "figure" here, if read in the Dionysian participatory way, indicate that the entrance of the bishop as a symbol for the divine economy is actually a participation in it.[87] The bishop through his ritual actions and movements manifests for the believers the christological condescension—not merely as some sort of ritual performance, but as a realization of a divine reality through participation. At the time of the entrance, the bishop ritually and thus iconographically depicts the saving actions of Christ, so that Christ is present and those viewing this event/image are changed by it.[88] The visible enactment of the liturgy is transformative for those who view it because the liturgy realizes the living and divinizing incarnational mystery. The liturgy is an event of kenotic power that produces the Christian subject in divine likeness.[89] The belief in this union, and the continued way

of speaking it so, reveals an identification of a totalizing reality, a dynamic of power in which the possibility of divisive dual realities is removed via a ritual discourse by setting the limits of conception and affirmations of truth in a divine source.

The elision of the earthly and the divine hierarch is made explicit in Maximus's explanation of the sequence of liturgical events following the reading of the Gospel. It is unclear in this sequence when the priest acts and when it is the high priest Christ acting, and even trying to make such a distinction in Maximus's view might be christologically problematic (as trying to distinguish the two wills rather than affirming two wills being present but viewing the perfect harmony of two wills through deification). For Maximus the "high priest" comes and leads the congregation through the word of the Gospel away from things earthly and on to things heavenly, and is thus the primary actor in the performance of the liturgy. When Maximus describes this liturgical contemplative ascent, it seems that indeed it is Christ who "teaches them [the congregants] unspeakable things [and then] as they are reconciled through the kiss of peace" and being set

> in the number of the angels through the Trisagion and having bestowed on them the same understanding of sanctifying theology as theirs, he leads them to God the Father, having become adopted in the Spirit through the prayer whereby they were rendered worthy to call God Father. And again after that, as having through knowledge passed all the principles in beings he leads them beyond knowledge to the unknowable Monad by the hymn "One is Holy," and so forth, now divinized by love and made like him by participation in an indivisible identity to the extent that is possible.[90]

Maximus asserts that the one leading the participants through the liturgy is Jesus the high priest, even though the participants in the liturgy would see the visible human ecclesiastical priesthood leading them through the liturgical functions. The claim is that in every liturgical action that occurs through the visible priesthood, Christ is in fact the primary actor. Ritually speaking, then, the priests and hierarchs in the context of liturgy realize and visualize for the liturgical participants nothing short of the saving actions of Jesus. The priestly activity in the context of the liturgy is eclipsed by the christological image visually and sacramentally so the priestly function is primarily expressed in terms of divine communication, and no priestly activity can actually be apart from that of Christ the High Priest.[91]

The ritual movements are much more than a mere reminder of a "fundamental reality" or representation of divine truth.[92] Instead, according to Maximus, the ritual activity—the movements of the bishop and the actions of the liturgical actors such as descending from the throne to send away the catechumens, "signifies and figures by itself the truth of which it is an image and a figure."[93] For Maximus, the ritual activity reveals God because it renders its participants as icons through scripted communication of divinity, in the same way that Christ is an icon or image of the Father.[94] The relationship between what is revealed by the bishop and accomplished by him liturgically is not something other than what is revealed by Christ, but rather is the divine likeness.[95] There is only one divine power and presence in which all participate.

Hierarchy in Praxis

In addition to the liturgical and theoretical contexts evinced by his own writings, Maximus the Confessor's appropriation and reflection of the Dionysian hierarchic ideal and conception of power is also illumined by the hagiographical and historical records of his controversial negotiation of ecclesiastical order and spiritual authority. Maximus employs Dionysius's conception of hierarchy implicitly to affirm his place as a participant in the authentic orthodox hierarchy while rejecting the imperial and ecclesiastical hierarchy that would otherwise appear to subordinate him. As a vocal diothelite, Maximus stands against both emperor and patriarch as recorded in the acts of his *Trial*, and redefines where the church is and who it includes by mirroring the Dionysian ideal of ecclesiastical hierarchy. Maximus refuses communion with Constantinople because it has "rejected the councils," and aligns himself with Rome because of its correct confession of faith (which makes it authoritative and realizing divine power on earth).[96] The test of authentic hierarchy is its ability to truthfully communicate God—and the East, with its compromising christological position according to Maximus, was no longer able to do so. For Maximus (and in continuity with Dionysius), a hierarchy that does not confess the truth of God is not hierarchy at all. In *Opuscule 11*, Maximus makes the claim that the "Church of Romans . . . holds the keys of the orthodox faith," which serves as an endorsement of the Roman Church's correct confession of doctrine.[97] Maximus approves and validates this ecclesiastical hierarchy because it holds and manifests the correct confession of faith—that is, it

authentically reflects divinity. The fulfillment of divinely ordained function in combination with confession of orthodox faith keeps the flexibility of the hierarchy firmly fixed to the truth of its divine origin. Maximus's realignment and communion with Rome during his exile, however, indicates a persisting faith in the ordained human ecclesiastical hierarchy as necessary and good, even while simultaneously ostensibly rejecting the hierarchy of unorthodox confessions.

Second, the hagiographical *Trial of Maximus* provides a continuity of expression between the description of Maximus's words and actions and the conception of ecclesiastical hierarchy found within Maximus's own writings.[98] For example, when Maximus is confronted by imperial delegates about his insubordination of the Byzantine emperor's decrees regarding christological discussions, Maximus explains that the emperor does not have authority in theological matters because he lacks any legitimate priestly authority.[99] By appealing to the same function- and activity-fulfilling hierarchic construction of priesthood present in the *Corpus Dionysiacum*, Maximus rejects the Constantinian notion of the emperor being a type of priest because the emperor does not fulfill the liturgical functions, place, or image of a priest.[100] The emperor is not a priest because, as Maximus states, he wears the "symbols of kingship" and not the "symbols of priesthood."[101] The emperor does have "power with God's permission to give life and to give death," but even this power in Maximus's conception is explicitly yoked to authority of the office and will of God—it is again divinely sourced rather than humanly originative power.[102] According to Maximus, there is only one who is both king and priest and that is Christ himself. The emperor lacks priestly authority because he does not participate in divine power through christological imitation.[103] For Maximus, as for Dionysius, the liturgical function of the hierarchy is intended to realize and reflect divinity among humanity. The ecclesiastical rites are not instances of mere symbolic representation, but heavenly participation in, and renewed revelation of, a hierarchy in which Christ is simultaneously ranked beyond and with humanity. In this liturgical context Maximus shows the authority and rank of the emperor to be limited and subordinate to matters of divinity.[104]

The emperor, according to Maximus (or at least Maximus's voice in the hagiographical *Trial* records), is most greatly empowered through condescension in divine imitation. Maximus explains that, in regard to the imperial and patriarchal confession of erroneous christology, "the emperor and

the patriarch [should] be willing to imitate God's condescension and let the former make a supplicatory rescript and the latter an entreaty by synodical letter to the pope of Rome."[105] Maximus makes humble penitence a means of reincorporating oneself into authentic hierarchical participation because it not only communicates divinity through the correct confession of faith but the penitent individual manifests christological imitation in the act of condescension. Maximus further explains that in the case of the emperor, "Of course he will do so [recant], if he wishes to be an imitator of God and to be humbled and emptied with him for the sake of the common salvation of us all, considering that if the God who saves by nature did not save until he was humbled willingly, how can the human being, who by nature needs to be saved, either be saved or save when he has not been humbled?"[106] The emperor is incapable of assisting others, exercising his "power" to give and take life, unless he himself is humbled. Humility is the means of accessing power, and through it one becomes divinely empowered. Without this marker of authentic self-giving divine love, one lacks any authority among the Body of Christ and restrains the possibility of accessing to true power. Maximus makes this evident in other places where he claims that "each person is sanctified by the scrupulous confession of the faith."[107] In confessing the faith and the "power and glory" of the One God, the hierarchical participants acknowledge that power originates elsewhere than with themselves. In the *Ascetic Life* Maximus further gives content to this conception of power, explaining that "the Lord bestowed on us the method of salvation and has given eternal power to become sons of God" in the condescension of mercy, love, and forgiveness.[108] The power that humans have to attain salvation is to make themselves imitators of God through love and condescension, and love cannot but pour itself out for others.[109]

In addition to limiting the legitimacy of ecclesiastical authority based on liturgical revelation of divinizing activity, Maximus also links the legitimacy of spiritual authority and ecclesiastical jurisdiction to the correct confession of faith and divinizing activity. Recorded as part of his *Dispute at Bizya,* regarding the imperial *Typos,* Maximus explains that the one who "receives the true apostles and prophet and teachers receives God," here qualifying that the leaders received are "true." The power of God in communicating God attests to the presence of God. Additionally, in the aforementioned statement Maximus makes the relational interactions for humans clearly synonymous with reception of divinity. The positions of

authority in the church, such as apostle, prophet, and teacher, according to Maximus, are made such by divine "election" and provided by God "to perfect the saints." The authenticity of spiritual authority is dependent on both divine ordination and pious fulfillment of that appointed ministerial function.[110] One's hierarchic calling is determined by God and designed to communicate divinely imitative service toward others in bringing about their perfection—a divinizing activity.

For the church to be christologically consistent, in Maximus's theological schema, a complete and yet unconfused union between earthly "powers" and divine power is necessary. Divine union, he claims, overcomes every division so that all of creation is "interpenetrated by God." At first this seems to convey a type of antihierarchical sentiment, but read against his nuanced christological backdrop, this interpenetration should not be taken to imply a confusing or mixing of particularities. Rather, it reflects Maximus's christologically based model of divinization as a voluntary subordination to the divinizing will of God. This is exemplified in Maximus's ascetic writings where he lauds the virtue of subordination to spiritual authority—particularly one's spiritual father—as a hierarchical arrangement of distinct stratified ranks functioning in christologically imitative and salvific ways.[111]

One final instance of hierarchic application is Maximus's treatment of Dionysius as authoritative in his own writings. In the introduction to the *Mystagogy*, Maximus situates himself and his work next to that of Dionysius's *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* in a way that some view as a rhetorical trope to respectfully introduce a necessary Dionysian corrective, but I contend is actually the Dionysian hierarchical influence in action. Maximus refers to Dionysius as that "the most holy and truly divine interpreter."[112] Nowhere is it clear that Maximus was duped by Dionysius's apostolic pseudonym, but nevertheless he still takes him as authoritative. With the august introduction, Maximus situates Dionysius as part of the authentic church, based on his communication of divinely reflective theology. Even with the dubiousness of the pseudonym being acknowledged in Maximus's day, Maximus rhetorically subordinates himself to Dionysius's alleged authoritative rank because Dionysius fulfills the activities of apostolic-hierarchic rank in such a way that Maximus recognizes the image of God and the possibility for divinization authentically attested to in the *Corpus Dionysiacum*.[113] Through his position, whatever historical or pseudonymical position that might actually be, Dionysius, in Maximus's eyes, "divinely

worked out" the "true revelation of ineffable mysteries" by his "divine intelligence and tongue," which ranks him in an authoritative hierarchic position.[114] To Maximus, Dionysius conveyed the truth of divine mysteries, and therefore Dionysius holds legitimate spiritual authority even if his historical claim to that position is false. Thus, Maximus essentially adopts the divine activity-determinative Dionysian conception of hierarchy as his own in order to justify his own use of Dionysian writings.

Conclusion

Maximus gives to the Dionysian concept of hierarchy a lived and theological interpretation that does not depend upon the textual use of the novel term "hierarchy," but rather shows a reliance on the profound theological dynamic behind it. Maximus uses this concept to affirm the importance of order, unity, particularity, and liturgical hierarchy while the historical (and admittedly hagiographical) evidence of his life displays a discontinuity with what one might otherwise identify as the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Maximus functions as a witness to a theological development in the idealization and application of hierarchy that is immensely significant for present day theological understandings of obedience, authority, and church order. If one considers distinctions such as gender, bodily difference, geographic identity, and social status in the church as ultimately secondary to a radically equalizing divine unity—as Maximus does based on christological claims—then historical and present-day issues that frequently divide or determine ecclesiastical hierarchy need reconsideration in light of their salvific and confessional function as manifestations of the divine image and the authentic presence of divine power. On a national and global scale, Maximus's conception and application of hierarchy is relevant for rethinking the ways in which church communions have been and continue to be divided. If indeed authentic hierarchy is linked to, and should mirror, a correct confession of faith, then separation from communion with a particular "hierarchy" is only legitimate, according to Maximus, in instances where the hierarchy is in fact no longer manifesting God due to an improper confession of faith.

While indeed entire books could be further devoted to the study of Maximus's relation to the *Corpus Dionysiacum*, with this chapter I have highlighted Maximus's sympathetic ideological navigation of the Dionysian hierarchic ideal as that which communicates the divine and brings

humans into divinizing communion. Maximus is an example of Dionysius's hierarchic legacy existing beyond the mere adoption of a term as a way to name the boundaries of orthodoxy and heterodoxy, legitimate and illegitimate positions of authority, and the image of God in this world that is ever active and yet paradoxically eternally the same. Maximus appropriates the Dionysian ideal of hierarchy as the communication of divinity in a distinct way by linking it to a specifically orthodox confession of faith, and adopts it as the theological foundation for his articulation of that which renders both lay and ordained humanity divinized and God manifest.

CHAPTER

3

Niketas Stethatos's Hierarchic Re-Imaging

Niketas Stethatos takes the Dionysian hierarchic ideal of determining hierarchy based on divine communication to its fullest conclusion. Stethatos asserts that there may be authentic hierarchs without ordination based on direct divine knowledge through mystical experience. Without being iconoclastic to the concept "hierarch" in a radical way, Stethatos limits the authority of those who lack divine initiation yet hold the office of hierarch.[1] Stethatos develops his hierarchical discourse to treat key intersections of ecclesiastical tension and pragmatic hierarchical questions in a way that maintains the sacramental efficacy of the Byzantine Church, and acknowledges corruption within it. Like Maximus, Stethatos continues in the Dionysian lineage of pressing forward the earthly conception of hierarchy by adopting divine reality as the fundamental determiner of legitimate ecclesiastical hierarchy. He does this, however, while wielding a measure of paradoxically traditional innovativeness to address his own theological concerns regarding ecclesiastical power and tensions of ecclesiastical authority.

The eleventh-century Constantinopolitan church encountered hierarchical challenges on many different fronts.[2] Controversies involving Latin customs and trinitarian beliefs, imperial morality, clerical purity, monastic spiritual authority, and movement toward greater liturgical standardization made the lifetime of Stethatos one of ongoing hierarchical challenges and reflections.[3] Little is known about the details of Stethatos's life apart from what is revealed in his own writings. The name "Stethatos" may signify something of Stethatos's character as a polemic and apologist, meaning

"courageous," but is more likely merely a family surname indicating "broad chested."[4] Stethatos allegedly became a devoted disciple of the more-famous Symeon the New Theologian (c. 949–1022) at an early age, and was involved in editing and distributing his works during Symeon's lifetime. After Symeon's death, Stethatos wrote a memorial oration for Symeon, was responsible for the translation and veneration of Symeon's "fragrant relics" to Constantinople, and published the hagiographical *The Life of Symeon the New Theologian*—all of which attest to Stethatos's unreserved admiration for his spiritual father.[5] During the middle of the eleventh century, Stethatos was an ardent spokesman for Patriarch Michael Celularius in decrying the customs of the Latins, and similarly wrote polemical treatises against the practices of the Jews and the Armenians.[6] As his patriarchal connection indicates, Stethatos was a significant monastic and societal figure in eleventh-century Constantinopolitan culture. As such, he was likely vying for the attention of the educated populace in the same circles as more "humanistic" authors such as Michael Psellos.[7] Despite Stethatos's own philosophical training, his selection of Symeon as a spiritual father indicates that Stethatos's intellectual formation blended between classical education and an appreciation for spiritual erudition acquired through experience.[8] In the last ten years of his life, Stethatos, attained the position of *higoumen* at the Studite Monastery, where he died having left a profession of faith and monastic *hypotyposis* for the guidance of the monastery.[9] Stethatos's devotion to Symeon, his own monastic leadership and ecclesiastical connections, as well as his vocal polemics and education, provided him multiple engagements with the meaning, problem, and maintenance of hierarchy, spiritual authority, earthly conceptions of power, and ecclesiastical orders at the theoretical, liturgical, and practical levels.

Textually speaking, Stethatos cannot fully be distinguished from Symeon. What is known of Symeon's life is in great part due to Stethatos's hagiography of him. There is very little evidence by which to assess Symeon independently and not just as an extension and construction of Stethatos. Moreover, the majority of Symeon's extant works were compiled and edited by Stethatos, so that it is nearly impossible to make clear where Symeon ends and Stethatos begins. The lines of authorship and original ideals are thus blurred between them.[10] That is not to say that no distinctions can be made between the two authors, but that no disagreement is apparent.[11] As Stethatos is such an ardent supporter of Symeon and distributor of his works, it is reasonable to suggest that Stethatos was aware of, and agreed

with, the majority of Symeon's extant writings (or otherwise he would have further edited them, not circulated them, or at least provided rationale in the text to explain away perceived incongruities). Secondly, in Stethatos's own writings it is impossible to distinguish Stethatos's originality from the influence of his teacher Symeon. Consequently, Stethatos's deep connection with Symeon warrants some consideration of the direct influence of Symeon's writings on the hierarchical synthesis of Stethatos.

Beyond his association with the controversial Symeon, Stethatos's compositional culture was hierarchically inflected in several respects. First, eleventh-century Byzantine religious culture was much about seeing and imaging heaven on earth, and Stethatos retains the Dionysian notion of hierarchy as primarily imaging and recognizing divinity.[12] The reverence given divine images was not limited to the icons "written" on the walls of the churches, but also included the reverence one was expected to give to the living "icon" of God found in one's spiritual father.[13] Such reverence was an acknowledgement of the divine image within participating in the heavenly archetype. Consequently, spiritual authority in the writings of Symeon the New Theologian, and then subsequently Stethatos, is determined by the ability of the spiritual father to image, and be recognized as bearing, divinity in the world.[14] Monastic order and obedience in Stethatos's historical-theological context represents an ideal of order and beauty that reflects the divine image, as the Body of Christ.[15] Postures of obedience and order are not taken as mere subordination to earthly power assertions, but rather a witness to the humility of the subordinate in recognition of the father's kenotically empowered authority. Symeon as a writer of the art of spiritual fatherhood reflects a Dionysian conception of authentic ecclesiastical hierarchy. According to his way of thinking, a spiritual father ought to communicate the power of the Divine Father, and without this divine power the spiritual father lacks any authority.[16] Obviously, Symeon is not the first in the Byzantine tradition to emphasize the need for a spiritual father, we see such emphasis in ascetic authors such as John Climacus before him, but he uniquely emphasizes the visible qualities by which one can recognize a spiritual father as indeed a empowered living icon in a time when this icon was frequently no longer recognizable as an image of Christ.[17]

Despite the "Triumph of Orthodoxy" just over a century earlier in which the defenders of icons prevailed over the iconoclasts, the decades that followed this triumph were burgeoning with internal distortion of the clerical

office as locus for the manifestation of authentic living priestly icons. According to Symeon, those who should have been the most accurate living icons of Christ by holding hierarchical office perverted, rejected, and marred their internal icons by sin and divine inexperience. In Symeon's view the clergy had become corrupted through spiritual laxity and worldly concerns, and consequently, the hierarchical authenticity of the priesthood was rejected.[18] Symeon represents the culmination of the monastic spiritual ideal in conflict with the nonmonastic lax and unqualified ecclesiastical authorities. Accordingly, with the writings attributed to him, Symeon is often figured as a champion of interior purity and mystical experience as requisite for hierarchical positions.[19] Although some disagree that challenges of ecclesiastical authority are authentic to Symeon's own writings, in scholarship and hagiography Symeon is generally characterized as being antiestablishment, and to some degree anticlerical.[20] Notably, however, Symeon himself was ordained to the priesthood.[21] His rebuke of the priestly ranks therefore is not an external critique of ecclesiastical orders at large, but an internal rebuke of the impiety of those filling the ordained ranks without divine reflectivity. Embedded within this critique is the rationale that these priests are inadequate to serve as spiritual fathers because they lack access to authentic power and do not have authority to exercise any power because they do not manifest recognizable markers of divine participation.[22]

Simultaneous with the challenge of monastic spiritual authority to nonmonastic clerical orders during Stethatos's lifetime was the gradual collision and assimilation of liturgical forms into greater standardization. This move toward increasing uniformity reflects a type of liturgical ranking in which the rubrics of the Great Church of Constantinople merged with monastic variants, and this was accepted as the most appropriate realization of the union between heaven and earth in liturgy. This normalization of liturgical rubrics also met with a flourishing of hymnography, especially housed in Stethatos's own Studite Monastery.[23] The interest in hymnography displays an aesthetic ideal grounded in an attempt to unite the celestial and terrestrial hierarchies through melody. Likewise, the uniformity of liturgical practice testifies to a dominating discourse of divine power produced and accepted from within the church. Iconostasis and church-domed interiors constructed in this period reflect a persistent idealization of the earthly ecclesiastical space as united to the heavenly, and earthly imperial powers identified with divinity.[24] Just a century ear-

lier, Germanus of Constantinople made this connection explicit in his *On the Divine Liturgy* saying, "The church is an earthly heaven in which the supercelestial God dwells and walks about," and due to the historical popularity of this text it is reasonable to assume the same sentiment holds true a century later.[25] Even the controversy over the use of azymes in Eucharistic bread (in which Stethatos was polemically involved) had much to do with an ideal of representing the paradox of divine power amidst humanity.[26] Additionally, the multiplication of titles and ranks at both the imperial and ecclesiastical levels demonstrates the pervasiveness of hierarchy and the level to which "τάξις" or order, was held as a divinely instituted and imperially imitated ideal.[27] The proliferation of signifiers in an attempt to represent the ultimately ineffable found a reflection in ecclesiastical hierarchy. All of these ecclesiastical components reflect persistence in the eleventh century to conceive of the church as a divinely ordered icon of heaven on earth that is enlivened by a unifying divine power—ever above and always invisibly present among humanity.

Hierarchy in Theory

Stethatos adopts the Dionysian teaching of hierarchy as authoritative and cites Dionysius at length in his own work, *On Hierarchy*.[28] He explains that the communication of divinity occurs in a divinely appropriate way as learned from the "most divinely-inspired words of the Areopagite and divinely-sweet Dionysius," offering at least a rhetorical acknowledgment of Dionysius's contributions to hierarchy.[29] This use of Dionysius as a legitimate source of divine tradition demonstrates Stethatos's attempt to name his work in continuity with Dionysian ideals, even while developing his own purpose in the text of speaking specifically of the ecclesiastical ideal of hierarchy in the clerical and liturgical contexts.[30] In addition to invoking the hierarchic founder as his primary source of hierarchic reflection, Stethatos also appeals to liturgical practice, scriptural citations, apostolic orders, and canons to make his writing grounded in accepted "divine" tradition. Additionally, he writes seeking ecclesiastical approval for his hierarchical treatise from another Niketas, the deacon of the Great Church and "ecumenical teacher (οἰκουμενικὸς διδάσκαλος)."[31] This approval that Stethatos receives also serves to legitimate his use of Dionysius, his own hierarchic elaboration of the Dionysian hierarchical triads, and the understanding of hierarchy as a whole.[32] Notably, later poetic acclamations for

Stethatos such as "Here ends the divine teachings and inspired mind and stylus of Stethatos," are preserved attached to this treatise in the manuscript tradition, suggesting a relatively uncontested (or perhaps otherwise unremarkable) reception of Stethatos's *On Hierarchy*.[33] It is worth considering, however, that such acclamations are instructive rather than descriptive of sentiment. Perhaps Stethatos was not well received and a later editor included the poetic acclamation to influence more widespread acceptance. The possibility that Stethatos's *On Hierarchy* had little impact or even a negative reception might resonate with the contemporary charge issued to Dionysius—that this overidealized sense of hierarchy has little or nothing to do with hierarchy in practice. The ideal of hierarchy as divinely founded, empowered, and preserved may have appeared subversive to those who would rather see the power of the hierarchy as person-specific and controlled by earthly authorities. Regardless, Stethatos wrote a theology of hierarchy grounded in Dionysian tradition, which was likely officially accepted by at least some prominent members of the ecclesiastically ordained hierarchic ranks. The ambivalence over Dionysius's authenticity as debated in the fifth and sixth centuries was no longer an issue by the eleventh century.[34] This is not to suggest that the issue of the pseudonym was entirely forgotten, but that it was no longer significant because of the ways in which the *Corpus Dionysiacum* had been employed to justify and defend orthodox positions, particularly during iconoclasm.[35] Accordingly, Stethatos in the spirit of Byzantine tradition draws upon Dionysius to justify his hierarchic teachings.

Like Dionysius, Stethatos claims that hierarchy is the communication of divinity to humanity; it is the realization of the spiritual in the material. The order and arrangement of hierarchy thus reflects a specifically trinitarian and christological divine image. Unlike Dionysius, who is christologically ambiguous, Stethatos clearly ties his understanding of what hierarchy looks like, what hierarchy does, and why hierarchy should be, to the kenotic divine image in specifically Orthodox creedal and liturgical language.[36] He clearly states in his hierarchical treatise that there is "one God the Father and one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God and Father, and the Holy Spirit the Lord and Giver of Life, one in nature, dignity, and power" in whose image and likeness is "our being."[37] Consequently, the power of the hierarchy for Stethatos is rendered as the power of the Holy Spirit, and the uniting of the celestial and ecclesiastical hierarchies is fundamentally a christological and trinitarian image of unity and diversity.[38] Stethatos ex-

plains in a distinctly Chalcedonian formulation that "Christ's incarnation is the uniting of the celestial and the earthly hierarchies in his person," and that through this hierarchical unity "God fills all with his heavenly power filling us with deification."[39] God's power is a deifying power, it pours out and elevates the lowly to a more empowered station, it is a power that is realized in self-giving.[40] Stethatos thus retains the Dionysian conception of hierarchy as imaging the divine among creation. Like Maximus, however, Stethatos also adds specificity to the divine image to reinforce the hierarchy as a reflection of Orthodox divinity. Linking celestial and ecclesiastical hierarchies in this way subverts ecclesiastical administrators who may not necessarily be authoritative in their mediation of divine power. The inscription of power on the Body of Christ as envisioned by Stethatos cannot be done from without, but is only sourced from within. It is only those connected to the divine power either through person or ordained office that can mediate it to others through self-giving and spiritual service.

Grounded in this christological image, Stethatos mirrors the Dionysian emphasis on proper hierarchic function originating with the correct ordering of one's soul. Stethatos makes this hierarchically ordered interiority specifically a reflection of the christological image wherein the human and divine are united, but following Maximus's diothelite emphasis, properly ordered. This move to interiority is not only theoretical, but also an expectation of monastic practice that emphasizes the individual as an icon of Christ, not just the Eucharistic community at worship.[41] Stethatos's own *Studite Hypotyposis* emphasizes the need for individual seclusion for appointed offices of prayers—that is, an opportunity to move hierarchically inward and focus on realizing hierarchy individually.[42] By moving inward physically and spiritually, one is able to order oneself for full hierarchic participation by emptying oneself of attachments and distractions that are not believed to be divinely imitative. Access to divine power requires giving up of the self to Christ through intentional prayer and mystical meditation. To be divinized, one must become a meeting point of the celestial and terrestrial hierarchies in oneself—as this is the divine christological and consequently hierarchical image. In this way, hierarchy functions at the microcosmic and macrocosmic levels for divine participation, so that, as Golitzin explains, it is in "the perfected human being as the great world and spiritual paradise, together with the eschatological sense of the Eucharist that we should look for Nicetas' understanding of hierarchy."[43]

Stethatos constructs hierarchy, as determined and realized by both an internal and external divine encounter. He makes having any power or authority to exercise power dependent on participation in and reflection of divine power.

Stethatos constructs his hierarchy as the mode of divinization through divine experience, and as such, it brings about a material and spiritual perception of God. In his *On Paradise*, Stethatos makes this relationship explicit—that both an internal and an external experience of God is possible and necessary because humans are twofold, both spiritual and material.[44] Human divinization, therefore, must work the spiritual through the material and create the kenotic divine image in both. Consequently, one's true hierarchic rank should be reflected and perceived through materiality. For example, Symeon and subsequently Stethatos emphasize the presence of tears and light as markers of divinization, which are indicative of a tradition of *penthos* wherein tears are a visible sign of charismatic authority.[45] Moreover, what is famously passed on in the hierarchy for both Dionysius and Stethatos is "light," but this light for Stethatos is not something that is only seen and experienced spiritually, but is the empowering light of divine vision. According to Stethatos, God alone has "sovereign power" to "retain and remove the limits of life," but this is shared through the giving of the "authority of the Spirit" and its receipt among the "fathers" of the church.[46] The ability to pass on light for Stethatos is directly tied to the experience of God as light. For Stethatos, therefore, the activity that determines one's legitimate interior hierarchical rank is reflected exteriorly.

In addition to developing physically and visually christological divine likeness as markers of authentic hierarchy, Stethatos also uses a discussion of music to convey an outpouring of diversified but unified divine imitation. Although Dionysius uses the verb "to hymn (ὑμνέιν)" repeatedly in the *Corpus Dionysiacum* to describe the function of the hierarchy and a type of human calling where the individuals take up the function of their corresponding celestial ranks, Stethatos makes the parallel between the heavenly and earthly realities even more exact by matching specific liturgical hymns with angelic ranks and corresponding clerical orders. The result is Stethatos's depiction of hierarchy as a beautiful and harmonious choir.[47] All of Stethatos's mapping depicts oneness in a celestial participation that is ordered in a stratified way but harmoniously unified in divine service. Thus, each of the hierarchies has its own liturgical hymn that, according to Stethatos, is also sung by the corresponding angelic rank. Accordingly,

by singing their hymns, the "two hierarchies . . . celebrate together and praise God with one voice."[48] The specificity of Stethatos's imagery contrasts significantly with Dionysius's intentionality in depicting the ecclesiastical rites without any specific words.[49] Instead, Stethatos makes singing the particular hymns descriptively constitutive of one's hierarchic rank. Accordingly, Stethatos explains that the aim of the hierarchy is to "form a choir and celebrate one faith with the other, whose beauty is appropriate to God, who is the simple good and principle of perfection and preservation, this is the mystery of our hierarchy that we men, in our capacity to participate in the deifying properties, become God and angels and before death we are reunited in proportion to the divine wisdom and knowledge received from the celestial powers and from God. Come then friend and join our table of illumination and perfection."[50] The hierarchy is a choir and its function is to praise, so that by participating in a beautiful hymn one becomes beautiful like God through participation. The hymn is a self-giving externalization that reveals a divinely ordered interior state. The choir is fundamentally Eucharistic in that its purpose is to offer thanksgiving and make one a participant at the "table of illumination and perfection."[51] For Stethatos, the participation in the harmonious hierarchical choir is divinization and should reflect divine beauty.

In naming hierarchy as a choir, Stethatos brings to mind for his audience the liturgical choirs and liturgical practice of his day. The eleventh-century liturgical antiphonal practice in Constantinople included multiple choirs singing in at appointed times, using specifically prescribed melodies, and melodiously expressing particular prayers in order to form a united service of worship. These multiple choirs stood under the mediation of one director, a hierarchical image of divinely reflective order, self-offering service, and harmony in and of itself.[52] Historically, the liturgy was most characteristically sung, so that it was by singing that one participated in the liturgy. The most notable example of this union of celestial and terrestrial hierarchies in song is the practice of singing the *Cherubikon* at the Great Entrance.[53] This hymn reflects the celestial-terrestrial unity and ascription of divine power with God in its lyrics: "We who mystically represent the Cherubim, and sing thrice-holy hymn to the life-giving Trinity, let us lay aside all worldly cares that we may receive the King of all, invisibly attended by the angelic orders, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia."[54] Within the lyrics of this hymn is the naming of the Trinity as "life-giving" and an instruction for responding through praise and angelic imitation. Stethatos's emphasis

on the harmony of the choir reveals an ideal of beauty and divine order that should make the praise like the subject who is being praised. As the *Cherubikon* indicates, angelic representation is a type of participation that leads to divine reception. The ability to receive God is dependent upon first laying aside one's preoccupations and attachments. This includes setting aside one's own conception of his or herself to inscribe a more powerful divine likeness. By putting off worldly cares and estimations of power, and acknowledging instead God to be the source of all power, this hymn indicates one may receive and subsequently be empowered by the divine "King of all." Just as Dionysius uses hierarchy to bridge the seemingly inaccessible apophatic and cataphatic divide, so too Stethatos uses hierarchy as a choir to hymn the God-above-all hymns in a way that brings about divine union. Divine power mediated through the hierarchy unites liturgical participants to heaven. Human "power" cannot perform such ordered, harmonious, selfless unity because it is always self-interested. Hierarchy, however, is an expression of and participation in divine power that unifies through mutual service and self-giving in recognizable divine imitation.

In addition to adding more specificity to the verbal content of Dionysius's hierarchy, Stethatos adjusts Dionysius's ecclesiastical hierarchy's composition of triple triads of clergy, laity, and noncommunicants to make hierarchy refer specifically to the clerical ranks. Whereas Dionysius claims that everything participates in the hierarchy, and in the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* explicitly includes the laity, with Stethatos the laity is not mentioned as part of his hierarchical schema at all.[55] At least in this respect, Stethatos has a more clerically focused interpretation of hierarchy. This is not to say that Stethatos conscientiously rejects the laity as participating in the hierarchy, but that by the eleventh century, "hierarchy" regularly referred to the ordained clerical ranks of the church.[56] Consequently, Stethatos shifts the Dionysian hierarchy to reflect the specific clerical hierarchic ranks of his day as fulfilling the divinizing Dionysian function.

Stethatos matches the functions of the clerical ranks with corresponding angelic orders to construct the hierarchical authority of the clerics as legitimate only when unified to heaven through divinely communicative activities. Patriarchs, he says, "succeed the apostles and like the Thrones receive thearchic illumination"—that is, "they participate in God before death"; metropolitans "are enriched in knowledge and contemplation of God"; and archbishops "keep the faith pure by being enflamed with zeal like the seraphim." These hierarchs are defined in terms of their actions

according to angelic service rather than appointment or ordination. According to Stethatos, bishops "bring others into the knowledge of the divine," priests "elevate others to imitate God," deacons "elevate them to knowledge of the divine realities," subdeacons reflect "virtue and purity," readers lead to the "purification of the faith," and monks are called to "be like angels."[57] The expansion of the Dionysian hierarchic association with activity directly reflects an emphasis on activity as determinative of hierarchic rank. One has authority only to the extent that one participates in divine power in a divinely imitative way. Stethatos claims to rely wholeheartedly on Dionysius, and yet, at the same time, readily adopts the challenge of making the Dionysian schema fit his more complex ecclesiastical reality by mirroring the titles and liturgical words of the various ranks omitted by Dionysius. Stethatos thus concretizes the parallels between the hierarchies that are triadically structured differently than Dionysius, while maintaining the Dionysian emphasis on function determining the hierarchic content of each rank. For example, Stethatos says the "Thrones, Cherubims, and Seraphims" are akin to "Apostles, Prophets, and Priests" because they "elevate the natural to contemplation to the mystical" and "by their orders one can enter divine service." This structuring reflects the Dionysian emphasis on correlating celestial and ecclesiastical ranks by activity, but the activity of the highest rank is not identified as perfection, but rather as mystical contemplation.[58]

Stethatos elaborates the paradigm further by drawing parallels between the other angelic ranks and more detailed ecclesiastical ranks. In this construction, Stethatos provides three triads for "our" hierarchy. The first triad consists of corresponding thrones and patriarchs, cherubims and metropolitans, and seraphims and archbishops. The second triad is composed of dominions and bishops, virtues and priests, and powers and deacons, and the last triad of principalities and subdeacons, archangels and readers, and angels and monks.[59] In the parallels between the ecclesiastical and the celestial hierarchies, Stethatos adapts the Dionysian construction to include more priestly ranks and to exclude the laity.[60] In doing this, Stethatos aligns hierarchy with power so that the ecclesiastical ranks are attributed spiritual powers, and the laity seems further removed from this power.

In addition to expanding and detailing the hierarchic relations between activities and ranks on heaven and earth, a distinction made by Stethatos in his hierarchic schema is the clerical rank given to monks as akin to angels and part of the triple triad ranked with the minor orders of the priesthood.

In the *Corpus Dionysiacum*, owing to its arguably Syrian background, monks are depicted as imitating the single uniqueness of Christ, which consequently made them the highest of the lay ranks.[61] By Stethatos's time, however, monastic literature, hymnography, and iconography in the Byzantine tradition had made monks imitators and participants in the angelic life—which is hierarchical for Stethatos.[62] Moreover, the elevation of the monks beyond the laity is in line with the emphasis of Symeon the New Theologian on monastic ranks becoming the inheritors of authentic spiritual authority after it had been rejected through sinfulness by priests and bishops.[63] According to Stethatos, the subdeacons correspond to principalities, the readers to archangels, and the monks to angels.[64] Stethatos himself even draws attention to the belt of the monks as a visible form of angelic imitation.[65] The incorporation of the monastic ranks into the clerical triple triad by Stethatos may have to do with the ritual by which monks enter the monastic life. The initiation into the monastic life by the eleventh century included a tonsure and vesting, which in many respects looked equal to, if not higher, than the ordination of the minor priestly ranks, such as reader and subdeacon.[66] In Stethatos's lifetime the distinction between clergy and laity was also reinforced ritually by the way the Eucharistic participants received communion, wherein "the Byzantine laity were given the sacrament by intinction, receiving a mixture of bread and wine administered with a spoon. The clergy, on the other hand, like the apostles in the paintings (icons), continued to receive the two Eucharistic species separately."[67] Despite this distinction, it is unclear in Stethatos's celestial mapping of monks alongside clergy if they participated Eucharistically as laity or clergy; which would indicate more of their degree of empowerment. Regardless, those who hold power and authority according to Stethatos are those who are adorned with self-abnegation and divine service, in this case the monks, who are ranked among the hierarchy.

Realizing Hierarchy in Ritual

Liturgical and monastic ritual for Stethatos is the context wherein the divine hierarchical order is manifest and constructed among humanity.[68] The hierarchic ideal is not a temporally or materially fixed signifier, but a means of naming the divinizing reality. Despite their chronological and theological differences, Dionysius and Stethatos produce ritual interpretations wherein the primary function of liturgical rites is divine communication.[69]

In the case of Stethatos the ecclesiastical participants have the ability to image, perceive, and participate in God through hierarchically mediated liturgy. The liturgical rites have the potential for at least two interwoven manifestations of divine power: the sacramental participation in divine power and the scripted iconic communication of divine power through liturgical action and representation. In both of these domains, power is manifest to the extent that it is given to others in kenotic imitation.

In his *On Hierarchy*, Stethatos claims that God "concelebrates with the two hierarchies to bring them to deification through divine vision," and thus figures God not only as the source, end, and power of the hierarchy, but also as the priestly hierarch ritually active within it.[70] If God is the concelebrant and the end goal of the ritual is divine vision, then presumably much emphasis (as it was in Dionysius and Maximus) is placed on viewing the ritual. Leslie Brubaker explains that from the fourth to ninth centuries there was a shift in Byzantine visual cultural ideals, so that by the ninth century, rhetorical descriptions of art reveal to us how Byzantines thought they should feel in response to art and how they often did.[71] That is, by the time we arrive at Stethatos, the hierarchical imagery he depicts is intended to elicit an emotional sympathy with a divine reality. There is a mode of participation where the imagery encountered in ritual acts upon the individual and the individual acts toward the imagery in a way that indicates adoption of ritually constructed divine reality as *the* reality. It is not a type of ritual "misrecognition" of the earthly as the heavenly; rather, for Stethatos, the earthly in the context of hierarchical celebration is heavenly, with God serving as the uniting mediator of heaven and earth.[72]

In his construction of hierarchy, Stethatos preserves the stratification of different degrees of participation as a paradoxical "harmonious" unity.[73] Stethatos constructs a recognizable divine image through the ordered unity of diverse ranks of ecclesial participants. Like Dionysius before him, Stethatos believes heaven is hierarchically ordered and every diversified rank has God alone as its ultimate sacred source. Ritual as a means of communicating and mediating divine power on earth, is therefore hierarchically ordered.[74] The art, architecture, vestments, and movements in Byzantine worship all reflect a type of orderly mediated and stratified divine participation.[75] Indeed, the whole ecclesiastical sensory program of iconography, architecture, ritual, clergy, and music is a type of heavenly *ekphrasis* or communication of the experience of the power of heaven on earth.[76]

Stethatos's emphasis on hierarchy as a living icon is reflected in his treatise on the belt of the deacons in the Studite monastery. In this short text, Stethatos makes clear that external ritual vesture should reflect one's ecclesiastical hierarchic rank and corresponding celestial function.[77] Stethatos says at the onset of the treatise that "our priests and our deacons find perfection in an analogy with the order at the top of the celestial powers," thus showing a desire to find connections between the two hierarchies as reflective of one divine reality.[78] The belt of the deacon, he says, "is consistent with that of the celestial intelligences," which according to Dionysius signifies "the control exercised by these intelligent beings over their generative powers . . . and their practice of gathering together, their unifying absorption, the harmonious ease with which they tirelessly circle about their own identity."[79] Stethatos draws the parallels between vesture and function by citing the words of Christ himself, explaining that "Christ our God, the great priest of the church of the faithful, confirmed the visions and revelations of the belt by the apostles saying 'gird thyself and serve me' . . . giving us the great church to our ministers the deacons, the wearing of a belt, in the image of the hierarchy above" (Luke 17:8). Thus, the belt in Stethatos's interpretation designates serving God and through this service reflecting a heavenly reality.[80] The divine ministerial activity of the diaconal rank is visually and ritually imaged in a vestment. The layering of vestments and simultaneous inclusion of various articles of vesture between different clerical ranks serves as a hierarchical ritual icon of divinizing activity and power through activities of ministration. By Stethatos's time, as the treatise on the belt serves to remind, the episcopal vestments included the components of all the activity-signifying vestments below it, hearkening back to the Dionysian construction of the hierarch rank as containing all the functions of those below.[81] Just as the hymn of each rank reveals the angelic concelebrants, so too the vestments reveal an icon of the way the individual or rank can be recognized and image divine activity in a divinely participatory way. Additionally, Stethatos claims that the ritual dress of the clergy also displays their historical significance as a symbol of voluntary submission. He explains that, "we wear the belt under the ancient tradition of the apostles, as is written by the great Dionysius . . . as described in the *Apostolic Constitutions*," evidencing that Stethatos does not rely on his own explanation as sufficient to justify liturgical dress, but rather appeals to apostolic tradition to bolster his authority.[82] The material garb in a ritual context of each rank thus

serves not only to communicate divine activity, but also to serve as visual-ritual "reminders" of a hierarchical lineage that can be traced to God himself.[83]

Stethatos makes clear that the ordained ranks have a higher potential for divinization, or greater capacity for divinization. Like Dionysius, Stethatos claims that earthly and celestial hierarchies participate in the same "knowledge and wisdom," with the level of participation based on one's "capacity."[84] He then poses the logical question begged of Dionysius: "How is it assured that the bishops have more divine knowledge and wisdom?" In other words, how is it assured that the bishops are actually higher up on the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and can communicate divinity to all those subordinate to them?[85] Stethatos resolves this tension by claiming that it is by virtue of the bishop's ordination that the episcopal candidate receives "grace from above and the apostolic dignity," which in fact "constitutes divine knowledge."[86] That is, ordination is the giving of divine knowledge, so that anyone ordained to a particular rank is ritually given the divine knowledge of that rank. Stethatos does not give a description of the ordination rite of his day, but the ninth-century *Barberini Codex* provides insightful evidence of a historically proximate rite. For a bishop's ordination, according to this text, the archbishop prays, "The divine grace, which always heals that which is infirm and supplies what is lacking, appoints the presbyter N., beloved by God, as bishop. Let us pray therefore that the grace of the Holy Spirit may come upon him."[87] The prayer is offered for the ordinand that God would fulfill any "lack" on the part of the candidate, the individual is appointed ritually through and by divine grace, and the intention is that he receive the Holy Spirit. The receipt of this gift of the Holy Spirit, however, depends on the willingness and prepared capacity of the individual. Stethatos clarifies that, when ordained, a bishop "received an abundant participation in the Holy Spirit which if received purifies the intelligence from ignorance and illumines him in the thearchic participation." Stethatos, thus situates the responsibility for any perceived discontinuity between clerical rank and divine hierarchical reality on the human rather than divine side, and aligns hierarchical ordination with the offering of thearchic illumination.[88] Ordination provides the opportunity to receive divine participation, illumination, and purification, but cannot unilaterally or forcefully do so.[89] This leads Stethatos to urge his readers to "have faith" in the source of divine knowledge and sacred mysteries. The implication here is twofold. First, that all bishops

have the highest level of divine participation based not on their personal spirituality, but by virtue of their ordination, and second, that grace is given at ordination, but whether it is received, and subsequently results in personal illumination, depends on the individual's cooperation with divine power.[90]

On the one hand, Stethatos makes clear that the ordained priestly offices by virtue of their ordination have access to the highest levels of divine knowledge and participation, so that one functioning in the office according to the priesthood can be the source of divine knowledge and participation for others. On the other hand, the individual ordained is offered the illumination and Holy Spirit at ordination but may not receive it or receive its fullness based on personal capacity. The priests' hierarchical rank is determined by his ordination, but allows for the possibility of discontinuity in divine knowledge and illumination in one's nonsacramental functions. Thus, Stethatos seems to protect the validity of the ordained ranks as "superior," while still allowing for a range of spiritual experience levels among priests. Stethatos explains that while "it is indeed common to all our hierarchs, priests, and deacons to participate in the celestial wisdom and knowledge, it is not common to all of them to participate in it equally," rather, he adds, it is "according to the extent of his own abilities."[91] He specifies, like Dionysius, that if a hierarch does not illumine others then "he is not a bishop" and he instead wears a "pseudonym."[92] Stethatos here, much like Dionysius and Maximus before him, shows the cards of his own power play in attempting to name the divine reality of the hierarchic positions. Interestingly, because Dionysius, according to Stethatos, does communicate divine truth, he would not be considered a pseudonymous hierarch, but rather a true hierarch.[93]

Although Stethatos defends the validity of the priestly function based on the grace given at ordination, and allows for a hierarchy of spiritual levels among the ordinands, he also simultaneously expands hierarchy by his understanding of charismatic authority. Stethatos goes explicitly where no one else had previously gone with respect to hierarchy, by making the outright claim that the hierarchic heights are open to the unordained by virtue of their divine experience.[94] Just as one who does not fulfill his episcopal function is not actually a bishop, so too one who does fulfill the function of a bishop in the divine experience he bears and by the illumination he brings to others, according to Stethatos, is "truly a bishop, even if he has not received the ordination from men which makes the bishop and the hi-

erarch."[95] Stethatos reiterates this point in several instances, to address the question what "if someone does not have the dignity (ordination) and that one exceeds the bishops in divine knowledge and wisdom?" The answer he gives appears limited to the ordained ranks, which for him include the monastic, saying, "if anyone, although it has not been ordained by men, received the grace of the height of the apostolic dignity . . . that is the word of doctrine and knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," then these should not "contradict the Word of Truth," and should embrace their true rank.[96] According to Stethatos, those who are ordained not by men but by the Spirit should act on their hierarchic rank by communicating divine knowledge to others.[97] Not only should the unordained hierarch teach and illumine others, he also should be recognized by others as possessing that rank, because a charismatic hierarch is more truly a bishop than one who has merely been ordained. Stethatos specifies that the one who is "under the influence of the Holy Spirit" is "God's spokesman . . . rather than one who has received episcopal ordination from men and still needs to be initiated into the mysteries of the kingdom of God." The latter ordinand who is uninitiated, according to Stethatos, is "overwhelmed by ignorance and living in extreme derision."[98] Stethatos again explains that a true bishop is one "who, following an extensive participation in the Holy Spirit, was purified in the mind from ignorance," and has "also acquired intelligence" through the thearchic participation.[99] Stethatos claims that this divine participation is recognizable and indicates one's hierarchic rank. Using an imperial analogy, he explains: "We say that, even as the insignia outside, I mean the tiara, purple, scepter, byssus make the emperor recognizable . . . even more so, it is an outpouring of great wisdom and superior knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven that make us recognize those who have the superiority of divine and sacred dignities, and not their own title."[100] The externalization of divinizing activity through "outpouring" is what ultimately determines one's true hierarchical title and power, so that a "hierarch" is not limited to referring to those ordained by men to the episcopal rank. A title does not confer power, but rather the sharing of divine power empowers one with recognizable authority. Stethatos's emphasis on externally and materially visible expressions of divine experience leads Joost van Rossum to the conclusion that visible charisma essentially trumps all hierarchic order—a conclusion that is only accurate and indicative of a problematic ecclesiological dynamic if hierarchy is considered primarily an earthly reality.[101]

Ritually speaking, the authentic imaging and recognition of the hierarchy as a divine image is significant for divine intercession. Brubaker observes an icon's intercessory function is akin to the function of the "holy man" in late antiquity, but I would suggest that in Stethatos's posticonoclastic context, it is the holy man whose function is akin the function of an icon.[102] Even this typological or iconographic imitation displays a normative acceptance of what transcendent power looks like incarnate. Hierarchy is a type of divine mediation especially as realized in its ritual context because it is therein that the union between heaven and earth is realized in the Body of Christ. Stethatos renders Symeon as an ideal icon of spiritual fatherhood, in the hagiographic trope of avoiding recognition or priestly office. Symeon was made all the more "perfect" in his leadership and priestly office because he expressed humility through avoidance of assuming it. Although, indeed, this is a stock hagiographical trope, beyond mere rhetoric it is indicative of a conception of power and authority that is inverted to worldly expectations.[103] Stethatos's teacher, Symeon, explains this relationship between the manifestation of the christological icon and the need for hierarchy (or at least spiritual mediation), saying,

> At all events our Master and God wanted to teach us that it is through a mediator and surety that we must come near to God, and as in all other matters he became an example and model for us himself, so in this too he was the first to be named mediator and surety for our nature, when he presented it to his own Father, God. Afterwards he designated his holy apostles as ministers of this mediation and suretyship, and they brought all who believed to Christ, the Master, and these in turn others, and those again yet others . . . is kept, and God does not want us to transgress the ordinance and tradition which are Christ's, but to continue in whatever he ordained.[104]

A spiritual father or a hierarch can only be a mediator to the extent that he participates in Christ's already accomplished mediation, and in the Eucharistic context this participation is perfected so that the hierarchy is an icon in intercession. Like Dionysius, Symeon points out that the ultimate hierarch is Christ and that the hierarchical order is "ordained" by God. Within the monastic context of Stethatos's time, the stratification of various monastic ranks subordinate to an abbot was also viewed as divinely instituted and reflective.[105] Stethatos depicts God as the founder of hierarchy so that participation in hierarchy is participation in the divine image.

Not only should the unordained "spiritual" hierarch teach and illumine others, he also should be recognized by others as possessing that rank because he is more truly a bishop than one who has merely been ordained. Someone who receives divine knowledge either through ordination or through unmediated divine experience according to Stethatos's construction has then attained advanced hierarchical rank, and is qualified and recognized to communicate divinity to others. The opposite is also true for the unordained—if someone does not have divine experience then they are in no position to administer to others. Stethatos uses a military metaphor to explain the life-and-death importance of having something divine to communicate if one is in a position that is intended to communicate divinity to others, saying, "If you are incapable of fighting even on your own behalf, then it is clearly inconceivable that you should do so on behalf of others and teach them how to defeat their invisible enemies."[106] It appears that for Stethatos, knowledge and experience are indicators of the ability to produce and mediate power authentically. One is unable to communicate divinity to another if one does not have it to begin with, or rather, have the knowledge of it to communicate. The priestly ranks are the exception, because in the ritual context they give something not from themselves but from Christ. Stethatos emphasizes that the hierarchy must have something in order to be able to give something. As we will see below, this is especially significant in terms of the Eucharist and confession.

A distinction between confession and the Eucharist as hierarchical rites is made by both Symeon and Stethatos. Stethatos explains in his depiction of Symeon that the gifts given in the Eucharist are not from the priest himself, but rather from God. Liturgically, the lines of likeness are intentionally blurred, especially by the eleventh century, so that the priestly hierarch should be an image of God to the people and recognized and reverenced as such, but even if not, ultimately the Eucharistic sacrament is consecrated by the descent of the Holy Spirit and offered through the high priesthood of Christ.[107] Stethatos remarks that Symeon could see the Holy Spirit "as an infinite and formless light descending upon him . . . throughout the forty-eight years of his priesthood" and see "Him descend on the sacrifice he was offering to God whenever he celebrated Liturgy."[108] Stethatos's depiction of Symeon in this way reveals his understanding of the relation between priest and Eucharistic sacrament. The priest, if worthy and divinely experienced as Symeon, could recognize and visibly see the divine consecration of the gifts, but even if not divinely aware, this consecration would

occur as dependent on the will of God, not the worthiness of a priest. Indeed, the unbounded-ness of the Eucharistic body is highlighted by other Byzantine hagiographical instances where someone accidentally consecrates the gifts not by individual worthiness, but by verbally invoking the power of the Holy Spirit.[109] The priesthood, as Stethatos indicates in his polemics against the Messalians, is necessary for "offering the chalice," which would put limitations on the hierarchic functions of the unordained hierarchs previously mentioned.[110]

Symeon separates confession from the other priestly rites and claims that ordination by men is not what is most important for a valid confession, but rather the ability of one's spiritual father to communicate divine knowledge. The ordained are permitted to perform the sacraments, and if they are unworthy celebrants they only bring condemnation upon themselves. In the case of confession, however, Symeon requires the priest to be first purified through divine experience in order to purify others. Symeon, and subsequently Stethatos, do not reject the unworthy priest in his liturgical function. Instead, Symeon looks forward to eschatological retribution, saying "What then in the age to come will be the fate of those who usurp the dignity belonging to the apostles when they are unworthy?"[111] Such a question again points to the lack of authority belonging to such a priest, and moves a more impressive authority to God who is the source of retributive justice and power. In his *On the Canons,* Stethatos appears to agree with Symeon, while adding that indeed a priest does have the power to bind and loose—but this is in reference to excommunication and the degrees of penance outlined in the canons of the church. The "power of the priest" is something given through ordination to all priests, and thus a priest is needed to administer it in a ritual context.[112] Liturgically and sacramentally speaking, the hierarchy is realized in and through divine power, mediated through but not dependent on the priests alone.[113] As John Meyendorff keenly observes (actually reflecting on Nicholas Cabasilas), sacraments in Byzantine theology are "understood less as isolated acts through which a 'particular' grace is bestowed upon individuals by properly appointed ministers acting with the proper intention, and more as the aspects of a unique mystery of the Church in which God shares divine life with humanity."[114] Outside of this liturgical context, however, the ordained priests are limited by their own divine knowledge and experience, and as we shall see for Symeon and Stethatos, the rite of confession blurs the lines between these two contexts. The apparent tension regarding the sacramen-

tal implications of Stethatos's broader conception of hierarch and restrictive priestly confessors is due to confession, including as H. J. M. Turner explains, "two ministries, one of which is charismatic and the other sacramental." In sacraments such as the Eucharist, the divine reality is not dependent on the personal experience of the priest. The priest is vested to convey divine likeness and his words and actions are liturgically scripted in rubrics so that the priest participates in communicating divine power through a set iconographic type.[115] In confession, however, the absolution cannot be separated from the counsel, and the personal experience from the spiritual ministry. Therefore, according to Symeon, confession depends more on the experience and penitence of the spiritual father for absolution and counsel than on whether or not he is ordained.[116] To function hierarchically, each hierarchic rank must have the divine power or knowledge that the rank claims to communicate in both ritual and nonritual contexts.

Hierarchy in Praxis

Stethatos is able to negotiate successfully instances of hierarchical tension by maintaining the Dionysian ideal of hierarchy as that which most fundamentally communicates divinity. For Stethatos, one of the most obvious places we see this negotiation is in the hagiographical depiction of his own spiritual father, Symeon the New Theologian. Even though Stethatos seems to innovate on the Dionysian hierarchic construction at the level of interpretive symbolism and liturgical correspondence, he maintains the emphasis on authentic ecclesiastical hierarchy as that which communicates God and therefore divinizes.

In his *Life of Symeon the New Theologian*, Stethatos portrays his spiritual father precisely as the type of unconsecrated hierarch he mentions in *On Hierarchy.* Stethatos names Symeon as a hierarch by relating that a bishop's *omophorion* would appear mystically over Symeon whenever he served liturgy.[117] The realization of Symeon's highest hierarchic rank occurs in the context of the Eucharistic celebration, as was noted above; hierarchy is most closely imaged to its divine archetype in the context of liturgy. Symeon, however, is a rather complex test case for Stethatos's theology of hierarchy, because he is an abbot, a priest, a monk, and a divinely experienced spiritual father who Stethatos actually portrays as a hierarch. This portrayal further serves to relocate the authentic hierarchy within the visibly charismatic

monastic ranks, but does so through a type of appropriation of the ecclesiastical orders that Symeon rejects due to the seeming spiritual laxity of the priests and hierarchs contemporary with him. During his life, Symeon frequently clashed with ecclesiastically ordained hierarchs over the veneration of his own spiritual father Symeon the Pious, his emphasis on visible signs of divine participation, his support of administering confession by those with spiritual experience even if they did not have priestly ordination, and his rebuke of the clergy of his day for possessing the office but not the activity of the priestly ranks.[118] Symeon tends to insist that "a guide (spiritual father) to whom a client resorts must not only have received the necessary training as it were academically, but also have assimilated it in his actual life and experience."[119] Stethatos claims that Symeon's true hierarchic rank is that of hierarch himself based on his divine experience and ability to communicate divinity to others. Instead of subverting hierarchy altogether in favor of a more anarchic charismatic organization, Stethatos identifies Symeon as an example of an authentic hierarch to redefine hierarchy in terms of degrees of authentic divine experience rather than ranks of clerical offices.

As Symeon's own writings attest and Stethatos's hagiography depict, Symeon is outspoken in rejecting the authority of priests and bishops merely based on the offices they hold. Symeon limits authority to those who have direct and visible divine experience. Perhaps rather dramatically, Symeon rejects any type of inherent power in a lineage or office (beyond the very specific liturgical functions) and instead locates power in the visible manifestation of divine experience.[120] Symeon even rejects a type of inherent authority subsisting in apostolic succession. He explains his reasoning, saying, "after the occupants of the apostles' thrones showed themselves to be carnal men, lovers of pleasure and glory, and after they fell away into heresies, the divine grace abandoned them as well, and this authority was withdrawn," and that "it is only the performance of sacred rites" that has been given to "patriarchs, metropolitans, and bishop . . . by reason of their ordination," not spiritual authority.[121] Symeon, and Stethatos with him, assigns all power to God so that only those with participation in God and visible divine likeness have any authority and access to mediate power (beyond the liturgical context).

Despite the strict prioritization of charismatic over sacerdotal authority, Stethatos maintains the priesthood as having particular functions based on hierarchical order. Even though there may be spiritual hierarchs with-

out human recognition, Stethatos maintains that these individuals may only act as such with the invitation of and in the service of others, not on or for their own purposes. In his hagiography of Symeon, Stethatos has the New Theologian advise the superior Arsenios that

> you should make your spiritual sons reverent, according to scripture, and teach them to be reverential of the holy places of God, and likewise of the vessels of his liturgy. For you must know that the apostles have blessed the handling of these vessels only by those among the monks who are ordained and the most pious and who participate in the mysteries of the Eucharist. For this reason you should not permit access to the divine sanctuary to all who want it, but, as I have said, only to the ordained and consecrated brothers.[122]

In this instruction, Stethatos cites Symeon as maintaining the importance of order and boundaries of space in manifesting reverence. Stethatos gives voice to Symeon, describing those who should be in the altar and handle the holy things as being ordained and "most pious" and explains that monks should not be admitted to the altar because of self-will or desire to fulfill a self-determined function because this would not reflect Christ-likeness. Accordingly, Stethatos's and Symeon's greater inclusivity in terms of authority for charismatic monks beyond their earthly or ordained rank is not a rejection of the priesthood or an opening of all priestly and hierarchic ranks to anyone. The greater inclusivity is more discriminating based on manifesting divine likeness that is acknowledged by others seeking Christ, not claiming for oneself a higher position out of self-seeking.

Moreover, although Stethatos is one of the most outspoken and arguably innovative writers on the subject of hierarchy, he still situates himself in continuity with a specifically hierarchical tradition, because that is where he and those before him have located divine power in an irreplaceable way. In his *Letter to the Higoumen Philotheos*, he lists the circumstances that should lead to the deposition or the suspension of a priest.[123] In this text, Stethatos presents himself as somewhat of an expert on canon law, by citing numerous clerical regulations from the Canons of the Apostles, Trullo, Chalcedon, and other authoritative texts on Christian priesthood and action.[124] By way of these citations, Stethatos places his own views of the priesthood and hierarchy in continuity with a tradition written by ecclesiastically ordained clergy, so that he uses the formulations of the hierarchy to rebuke the hierarchy and to name himself in continuity with it. This

fragment contains a negative list of actions for which a priest could be removed from his priestly activities or office, but does not include positive qualifications that make one a true priest, as cited elsewhere.[125] Here, by way of negation Stethatos makes clear what types of actions exclude one from the priestly rank. Notably, everything Stethatos lists that could exclude a man from the priesthood is a self-serving activity, so that divinely reflective self-emptying activity again is shown to be determinative of authentic hierarchic rank.

Despite the apparent broadening of the hierarchic heights to include those spiritually ordained hierarchs without human ordination, in *On the Limits of Life*, Stethatos explains that lay persons are not to teach in the church because this would be a "doctrine different from what the Fathers have transmitted" and is a "sign of pride."[126] It may seem contradictory that Stethatos rejects the laity as teachers, but simultaneously affirms that unordained individuals can in fact be hierarchs. He brings canons and patristic teachings against laypersons who dare to take up dogmatic teaching, and explains that these disregard the "order," consequently render the Body of Christ disfigured with members trying to function in places to which they are not ordained.[127] The key to resolving the apparent contradiction is that Stethatos sees lay teaching as not reflective of the authentic divinizing divine image because it takes on an activity that is out of order for its rank. The lay teaching is thus antihierarchical, because it reflects "pride" instead of the serving love of divine reflectivity and breaks with the hierarchical naming of the past.[128]

Conclusion

In conclusion, Stethatos navigates the complex hierarchical dynamics of his own day by applying the Dionysian ideal of hierarchy in a new way to mediate ecclesiastical power and authority as divinely reflective and participative. He articulates an ideology of hierarchy that reflects the ecclesiastical reality of eleventh-century Constantinople while remaining in a tradition of determining authentic spiritual authority by divinizing activity. This program of living divine representation, reverence, mediation, and participation is grounded in physical recognition of the divine presence among humanity as out-pouring and its perfected liturgical revelation. The image acts on the individual by truly communicating God, and the individual is shaped by this in approaching the icon with "the fear of God,

faith, and love."[129] Stethatos provides us with a hierarchical theological case study for the concretization of hierarchy in the clerical ranks while being authentically charismatic by bearing the image and presence of God within itself. What precisely this image looks like is again reflective of the Dionysian conception of hierarchy, as Stethatos names the authentic hierarch—and the authentic hierarchy—as those who can actually bring about divinization through their own charismatic divine participation and self-realization through earthly self-abnegation.

Stethatos's original hierarchical contribution of widening the hierarchic ranks to include the unordained, as he simultaneously takes hierarchy as a category referring to the clerical ranks, leaves much for future reflection. Specifically, Stethatos's hierarchic construction and navigation may prove particularly resourceful for critically reevaluating the validity of the theological justifications given for the practices of ecclesiastical hierarchy being exclusively male in its ordained priestly ranks. As we see in Stethatos and those before him, hierarchy is not fixed in human content, but rather is a signifier for the authentic communication of divinity (both in image and sacramental substance). Reflecting on how divinizing activity and imaging God authentically function as the determiners of hierarchy's form and content may help to expand the Orthodox understanding of the relation of gender identity to ministry. For example, Stethatos's call for recognizing those who have received the ordination of the Holy Spirit, even if not men, would be applicable to the numerous women who no doubt fulfill hierarchic ranks without formal ecclesiastical recognition. Hierarchy as a paradoxical inclusive exclusivity—comprising those in any rank who participate in divinizing activity and excluding everything that is not divinizing, makes human acknowledgement of the divine hierarchical reality secondary to the divine reality itself. The conception of hierarchy for Stethatos is a divine image of empowered participation and kenotic ministration in which the clerical ranks function celestially through divine charisma. For Stethatos, the charismatic is the most hierarchical, and the authentic hierarchy is wherever there is authentic charisma.

CHAPTER

4

Nicholas Cabasilas and Embodied Authority

The hierarchical theology of the fourteenth-century humanist and hesychast-supporting lay theologian Nicholas Cabasilas parallels and expands several themes in continuity with Maximus and Stethatos—namely, the distinction of authority in sacramental and pastoral matters. Cabasilas is consistent with the previous two authors in his reflection of the Dionysian theological conception of hierarchy as divinizing activity, and he uses this conception to negotiate the theological and practical challenges of hierarchy in his own context. Cabasilas is unique, however, in his application and development of this theological ideal by grounding it in the Pauline imagery of the ecclesiastical participants as the Body of Christ.[1] Drawing on the corporeal imagery as a means of expressing his theology of ecclesiastical hierarchy without frequently naming it as such, Cabasilas constructs participation in the Body of Christ as the only means to divinization. Additionally, in nonsacramental contexts, Cabasilas, relies on christological imitation—and therefore divine communication and reflectivity—as the only source of, and justification for, spiritual authority. Cabasilas's theology of ecclesiastical hierarchy and its relation to power are both consistent with, and reflective of, the Dionysian formulations. Simultaneously, however, Cabasilas is original in his naming, expression, and application of hierarchy primarily in terms of the realization and reflection of the Body of Christ. Cabasilas's insight into issues of hierarchy, authority, and power provides room for speaking to both historical and contemporary ecclesiological concerns about sacramental validity and participation.

Nicholas Cabasilas Chamaetos was born in 1322 to a noble family in Thessaloniki and received his education in Constantinople.[2] He was imperially and ecclesiastically well-connected on both his maternal and paternal sides, and is often characterized as a humanist and a supporter of the hesychast theological position.[3] His maternal uncle, who is generally viewed as the primary influence on Cabasilas's life, was patriarch of Constantinople from 1380 to 1388. This uncle's influence may also be the reason Nicholas preferred his maternal surname, Cabasilas, rather than his own paternal surname of Chamaetos. Cabasilas's letters indicate that, owing to his uncle's connections and influence on his education, he was well-known among imperial-ecclesiastical circles and acquainted with the emperor himself.[4] Indeed, Cabasilas was a partisan and protégé of John Cantacuzene IV, and was a close friend and supporter of Gregory of Palamas.[5] Unlike the polemical Stethatos, Cabasilas was engaged constructively with Latin theology, although it is unclear precisely under what circumstances and with which sources he had his Latin encounters.[6] Admittedly, Cabasilas's extant writings do not address themselves explicitly to the subject of hierarchy or interpreting Dionysius. As the imperial and ecclesiastical situation of his life may suggest, however, Cabasilas was respondent to hierarchically charged theoretical and practical challenges of power in a way that is consistent with the Byzantine authors in the preceding three chapters. Cabasilas is generally believed to have spent his life as a celibate lay theologian and perhaps lawyer, but there is also some suggestion that he may have followed Cantacuzene to retire in a monastic community, and even have been ordained to the priesthood in the final years of his life before he died in 1391 or later.[7] The suggestion that Cabasilas retired to a monastery, if not historically accurate, may represent a type of co-opting of Cabasilas's insights into the ordained and monastic domains, and reflect an ambiguity surrounding the status of lay theological accomplishments in Orthodox Christianity.

As an acquaintance of Gregory Palamas, and a noted socially and imperially "anti-Zealot" Cantacuzene supporter, Cabasilas was undoubtedly aware of the hesychast controversy of the fourteenth century even though he does not appear to substantially address it in his major extant works.[8] The controversial context shaped by hesychasm, however, is still relevant, because it forms the backdrop against which Cabasilas's writings were composed and initially received.[9] The particular challenge of hesychasm to the institutionalized hierarchy and liturgical sequence is something akin to

the tensions read within Symeon the New Theologian and Stethatos a few centuries earlier. Hesychasm, however, even at its climax of controversy, is difficult to precisely define. It not only refers to psychosomatic practices of quiet prayer and emphasis on the human ability to experience deification, or *theosis*, but also includes and reflects a culture of political, social, and religious ideals. Far from the modern overgeneralization of hesychasm as a esoteric monastic mystical movement opposed to rational and humanistic study, proponents and defenders of the hesychast position were in many cases noble property owning anti-Zealots and political supporters of Cantacuzene. Often, these hesychast constituents were highly intellectual and ecclesiastically supportive of Gregory of Palamas being appointed Archbishop of Thessalonica.[10] The Zealot uprising was mostly an economic, antiaristocratic movement that led to social and political turmoil, but nevertheless was also reflected partisan ecclesiastical trends.[11] Especially after the Palamite victory in the Council of 1341, however, it would be inaccurate to characterize Cabasilas's context as being foremost marked by divisive tensions between hesychast-monastic and institutionalized spiritual authorities. One only has to look to the person of Gregory of Palamas, the defender of the hesychasts who was also a learned archbishop, to appreciate how these positions overlapped in prominent ways.[12] Accordingly, it is productive to view Cabasilas's writings, especially in consideration of his idealization of hierarchy, as sharing several common theological foci with the hesychast ideals.[13] Cabasilas's two most prominent theological writings, *The Life in Christ*, and *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, have central christological foci that depict participation in Christ as the only means of true life.[14] The hesychasts, with the characteristic focus on Christ through the practice of repetitive "Jesus Prayer," share Cabasilas's emphasis on authentic participation in and experience of Christ in this life.[15] Additionally, present within Cabasilas's own writings is the belief that authentic divinization is possible in this life and ultimately is the source of true life, which aligns well with his characterization as a hesychast supporter.

In addition to living in a theologically and intellectually hierarchically charged context, Cabasilas is one of the primary sources for understanding the interpretation and composition of fourteenth-century Byzantine liturgy. The ritual sequence and significance described by Cabasilas in his *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy* and *The Life in Christ* reflects the "final synthesis" of the Byzantine liturgy after iconoclasm and reflected further

developments of standardization.[16] Contemporary with Cabasilas's compositions was the publishing of the liturgically reflective and instructive *Diataxis* of Philotheos that led to the widespread shift toward liturgical uniformity among the Byzantine Church rubrics.[17] Additionally, Cabasilas's liturgical context was visually changing as well, which influenced how one could perceive the clerical hierarchy and sacramental hierarchic rites as communications of divinity. By the fourteenth century the iconostasis in the church buildings began to develop in many places to block the sanctuary from the complete view of the congregation, which further separated the laity and the clerical ranks during worship. Even more significantly for Cabasilas, it further separated the sacraments visually from the congregation, distancing them from the visually active iconic liturgical involvement.[18] Additionally, by the fourteenth century there was a continued elaboration of the clerical liturgical vestments of the clergy that became more sacralized with significance and insignia of the heavenly and diminishing imperial kingdom, and further marked distinct ranks and orders as ritually significant.[19] It is also in this period of liturgical development that the priests' prayers became more developed in their private and penitential forms, indicating a further distinction being drawn between clergy and laity in the liturgical context.[20] Moreover, in his liturgical commentary and contemplation, Cabasilas seems to be offering a corrective for the overly and merely symbolic interpretations and representations of the liturgy, as we see in the liturgical commentary of Germanus of Constantinople.[21] Lastly, despite Cabasilas's clear appropriation of Latin theological ideals in several instances, his extensive treatment of the consecration of the gifts cannot be read outside of the context of the heated liturgical debates about the moment of consecration between the East and West following the eleventh century.[22] All of these developments influence the ways in which Cabasilas prioritizes divine reflectivity and divine participation liturgically.

In the two centuries preceding Cabasilas's lifetime, there was a tendency for a significant portion of the ecclesiastical attendees not to regularly partake of the Eucharist, likely due to sentiments of unworthiness, doubt, and disinterest.[23] Cabasilas's writings respond directly to this dilemma and offer a remedy for the hesitation of participation by noting the generous action of Christ in the sacraments, and the inherent unworthiness of any human person to partake of or offer the sacraments.[24] Cabasilas's *Life in Christ* and *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy* are fruitfully read as responses to this trend, emphasizing and defending the significance of liturgical

participation for all Christians.[25] Cabasilas's liturgical interpretations offer a new take on the liturgical reality and the function of power and authority within the liturgical-sacramental context. To this end, these writings describe the members of the Body of Christ as all sacramentally born participants, primarily constituted by the laity, and are notably accessible in their style for so learned an author. This suggests that Cabasilas may have written his liturgically oriented works with a broad audience in mind.

Within his writings, Cabasilas develops the theology of ecclesiastical hierarchy in a way that is consistent with the original Dionysian formulation. Cabasilas focuses his discussion of liturgical participation as divine communication, makes divinizing activity constitutive of ecclesiastical rank and order, and names divine reflectivity as requisite for spiritual authority. Additionally, Cabasilas explicitly names Dionysius as authoritative in his own writings and addresses ideological, liturgical, and practical issues of ecclesiastical participation, power, and authority.[26] Much like Maximus, however, Cabasilas does not make significant use of developing the term "hierarchy" beyond the liturgical context. Moreover, Cabasilas limits his references to Dionysius to appealing to him as an authority on liturgical theology.[27] Cabasilas, however, like Dionysius, does refer to the senior liturgical celebrant primarily as "hierarch" rather than "bishop," and typically uses the word "hierarchy" when discussing the uniting of the heavenly and earthly assemblies in worship.[28] In addition to borrowing the terminology coined by Dionysius, Cabasilas does reflect theological themes present in and developed from the *Corpus Dionysiacum*.[29] In addition to Dionysius, however, elements in Cabasilas's writings can be traced to Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Maximus the Confessor, Symeon the New Theologian, and Gregory of Palamas, among others. In Cabasilas's overarching aim to demonstrate what the life in Christ is and how the faithful are to preserve it, however, his hierarchical model of legitimate authority and power is consistent with Dionysius's.[30]

Hierarchy in Theory

Cabasilas, much like Maximus and Stethatos, inseparably identifies hierarchy with Christology. Cabasilas mirrors the Dionysian hierarchic construction by figuring Christ as the true divine hierarch and the one who is the origin, sustainer, and end of the hierarchy.[31] Cabasilas links this chris-

tocentric hierarchic ideal, however, to the specific christological action of divine condescension in the incarnation.[32] More precisely, Cabasilas's hierarchy is founded on the dynamic of divine condescension in the incarnation as the means of human salvation and ascent through participation.[33] Cabasilas explains salvation through incarnation in terms of order or "τάξις," saying,

> In this way we are joined to Him who for our sake was incarnate and who deified our nature, who died and rose again. Why then do we not observe the same order as He, but begin where he left off and reach the end where He began? It is because He descended in order that we might ascend. It is by the same path that it was His task to descend, that it is ours to ascend. As in the case of a ladder, that which was His last step as He descended is for us the first step as we ascend. It could not be otherwise because of the very nature of things.[34]

The order of human salvation is participation in the christological procession, rest, and return through inversion. Christ's kenotic condescension is the model for human ascension, so that power is manifest through paradoxical self-giving humility. This type of sequence associated with hierarchy, articulated robustly in the patristic tradition by such authors as Athanasius, is thus christologically instituted.[35] According to Cabasilas, such an ascent through descent "could not be otherwise," suggesting the concept of hierarchy is a concession to human nature lacking in any inherent power from its participants.[36] The type of ascent indicated in this explanation, however, also implies an upward movement that is distinct from the ascent that is also within one's rank as with Dionysius.[37] The difference here, however, is that these are the steps of ascent possible in each one's rank that deify that rank, or rather, the person uniquely holding that position.

Cabasilas figures divine communication through the sacramental rites as participating in the divine head—that is, the head of the hierarchy—or the head of the ecclesial corporeal body of Christ. Through his participation, one has access to the saving atonement of Christ.[38] Cabasilas explains that "it was after the cross that we were united to Christ; before He had died we had nothing in common with Him. He was the Son and the beloved One, but we were unclean, slaves, of a hostile mind. It was when He had died and the ransom had been paid and the devil's prison had been destroyed that we obtained freedom and adoption as sons and became

members of that blessed Head. From Him, therefore, that which belongs to the Head becomes ours as well."[39] The "head" for Cabasilas is the "hierarchy," because it is the activity and site of divine communion and our divinization.[40] The power of Christ shared within divinization is power over death achieved through self-giving. Cabasilas does not describe our participation in this instance—the participation in the redemptive and saving work of Christ—as bodily members such as the foot or the arm, but rather he says as "sons" we become "members of that blessed Head." Our stratified and disparate union as members is regardless of position united to the Head, to the source of equally offered redemption. Simultaneously, then, we are both members (or body and head) and the head is both only one and many through unitive participation. The union and membership that Cabasilas mentions is not just a figure of speech, or only eschatologically fulfilled, but "the very essence of the Eucharistic mystery."[41] Although Cabasilas does not name this image as specifically hierarchical, the type of activity and stratified but equalizing participation and divinization he describes is reminiscent of the hierarchic ideal argued within the *Corpus Dionysiacum*.

Despite the seemingly equal invitation and participation in Christ the divine head, Cabasilas accounts for differences in holiness based not on hierarchical rank, or status, but on individual willingness. Hierarchical participation is dependent on divine cooperation, so that Cabasilas can claim "the resurrection is the gift common to all men, but remission of sins, the heavenly crowns, and the kingdom become theirs alone who have given due cooperation, who have so ordered themselves in this life as to be familiar with that life and with the Bridegroom."[42] This soteriological claim affirms God's universal saving action and accounts for the remaining seemingly unaffected state of many sacramentally participative individuals. In this distinction we see, much as with Stethatos, Maximus, and Dionysius before him, an emphasis on interior ordering as a type of hierarchy. By ordering oneself internally according to God's will, one participates hierarchically in divinity. Effectively, spiritual ascent is not a type of progressive movement through clerical orders, but is interior participation of the human person in God. By constructing the level of divine participation as dependent upon the individual, Cabasilas preserves free will and acknowledges diversity of spiritual levels, and maintains that the hierarchy is fundamentally equalizing and available to all.

Cabasilas further develops this way of thinking by drawing on the image of the church as the Body of Christ. The church as Christ's body ultimately is not broken or in any way found lacking, even when inclusive of individual members who are very much spiritually broken. He explains: "Just as the members of the Church, such as Paul and others like him, should complete what is lacking in Christ (cf. Col. 1:24), so it is not incongruous if the Head of the Church supply what is lacking in the Church. If there are some members who appear to be helping the Head, how much more fitting it is that the Head himself should add that which is lacking for the members?"[43] This bodily imagery makes clear that like Dionysius, the hierarchy as the Body of Christ cannot be damaged or jeopardized in any way or in some way "block" divinizing access for some individuals due to the sinfulness or "lack" of some of its members.[44] The power of the hierarchy originates with and flows from the divine "Head." For Cabasilas, Christ provides the lack even to those who are not appearing to help Him, or cooperating with divinizing potential, for the benefit of the whole. The key to this divine addition is that one is a member of the Body—that is, for Cabasilas, a participant in the life of Christ through sacramental initiation and continuation.

Just as anything negative or seemingly detractive from the beauty of the Body of Christ is overcome by the divine Head, Christ himself, so also anything good is also from Christ the Head. Cabasilas explains that "the splendor and beauty of the members come from the Head, for they would not appear beautiful without being attached to the Head"—that is, without being attached to the source and definition of beauty. Cabasilas continues in the same passage to explain that this beauty is often "hidden" in the current life, indicating a divergence between the visible and flawed or deceptive hierarchy and the invisible heavenly reality of hierarchy perfected.[45] Symeon of Thessalonica a few years after Cabasilas similarly explains that "the Lord's priestly activity and communion and contemplation constitute one single work, which is carried out at the same time both above and here below, but with this difference: above it is done without veils and symbols, but here it is accomplished through symbols," reflecting the singularly divinely empowered "work" of the sacraments as described by Cabasilas.[46] Cabasilas further explains that "the Head of these members is hidden in the present life but He will appear in the life to come. Then the members too will be resplendent and will be clearly manifested when they

shine brightly with their Head."[47] The beauty of the hierarchy is Christ, and therefore the hierarchy is only beautiful—only truly hierarchy—to the extent that it is manifesting the Head. In the context of the liturgy this divine manifestation and realization occurs most overtly when the Eucharist is celebrated. Although God is manifest resplendently in the liturgy, the glory and beauty of the liturgical participants is not necessarily fully recognized in this life, but it will be in the next with Christ. Much as in Stethatos's hierarchical conception, there may be some divinely participative members of the hierarchy that remain unrecognized in the visible structure of the hierarchy in this life. Some may appear "lowly" and in fact be glorious, while others may appear higher in rank and in actuality be devoid of divine participation—being supported in the hierarchy only by the Head supplying the lack.[48] Cabasilas renders power as a paradox, and the resolution of perceived hierarchic tensions lies in a reframing of reality in terms of divine rather than human conceptions of status and authority.

Cabasilas makes clear that those who may appear to have more "gifts" or to be "superior" in their divine participation appear this way because Christ has given them more grace due to their own personal participation and ascent.[49] He explains: "It would not be reasonable were the greater gift available to all who desired it, while the lesser were available only to those who have been cleansed by their struggles or by the Mysteries. On the contrary, it is reasonable to conclude that the latter gift is more perfect, since it is not obtained save by many and noble efforts."[50] Like Dionysius and those following him, Cabasilas ranks the liturgical rites based on levels of participation, and a progression that is spiritually necessary for divine communication and participation. Cabasilas constructs the rites and their order as the mediation of a divinely revealed reality and divinizing participation achieved through divine-human cooperation.[51]

In describing Eucharistic participation, Cabasilas identifies the highest form of prayer as a self-emptying kenotic prerequisite of divine empowerment. He explains that "the pure worship of God consists in being subject to Him, obeying Him, doing all things as He moves us," and then concludes that this is foremost achieved through participation in the Eucharist, saying, "I know not how we are capable of being subject to God more than by becoming His members." The reason, then, for this level of subjection in Eucharistic participation is because through it, according to Cabasilas, the participant becomes a member of the Head and invites mutual indwelling of Christ in him or herself.[52] Worship is in subjectivity—in

being lowly, one offers "pure worship." What is really remarkable about this description is precisely the terminology that would be so off-putting about hierarchy in many present-day conversations, but in the Byzantine theological and christological contexts are markers of divinization. Being "subject" to another, "obeying" another, and being "moved" by another is a limitation in autonomy, and presumably these behaviors, while directed toward and participative in Christ himself, in practice are done in relation to another human being—likely a spiritual father or member of the clerical ecclesiastical hierarchy liturgically.[53] Indeed the scripted-ness of the liturgy implies this type of subjection, obedience, and movement to God that one achieves through subjection, obedience, and movement as dictated by another human person of the hierarchy. Cabasilas re-imprints all subordination as divine subordination despite the condition of the living human icon. Robert Taft observes that during Cabasilas's lifetime, "the Byzantines saw their highly ritualized society as nothing less than an image of the divine world. This was especially true at their churches and liturgy," and I add that for Cabasilas, this image is not just the church edifice or rituals, but the subjected, obedient, and therefore empowered ecclesiastical participants realized as the Body of Christ.[54]

Cabasilas's theory of hierarchy relies on the presumption that ecclesiastical order, especially liturgically, and the fulfillment of the ministerial offices are the means of fulfilling divine law, and as such are in themselves divinizing activity. He explains that "God's laws which apply to human activities and determine and order them towards Him alone impart the appropriate habit to those who act rightly, which is to will that which pleases the Lawgiver and to subject all our will to Him alone and to will nothing apart from Him."[55] Hierarchy envisioned as part of "God's laws" means that it is the means of bringing humans into communion with God and reshaping humans through hierarchic fulfillment in the Divine image in a unitive and participatory way. Cabasilas figures God as the supreme legislator, thus blurring the lines between civil and ecclesiastical law as a single reflection of divine law.[56] God as the "supreme legislator" acts through the temporal and traditional hierarchy of the church via the disciples and bishops to transmit and maintain divine law. According to Cabasilas, the bishops as earthly hierarchs are not inventors of their own laws, but mediators of the divine law that should not be broken. Any legitimate authority either from law or person is based on a similitude to divine reality. According to Cabasilas, the breaking of the

divinely instituted and transmitted law is a negation of the christological mission, for which God "created the world and appeared on earth in order to establish his laws in it." Consequently, those who disobey or neglect God's laws display a type of divinely opposed "sickness" (νόσον νοσῇς).[57] This type of legislative mapping of divine law onto the ecclesiastical leaders ignores the possibility of an ecclesiastical cleric constructing a law or order that is contrary to God's law. Cabasilas's mode of theological writing is founded with the prioritization that God alone is the source of power and participation in this divine power determines the legitimacy of hierarchical participants.[58] This issue is addressed to some degree in Cabasilas's anti-Zealot treatise where the law of the church resides in the church as the Body of Christ composed by all its members in communion with the divine Head. The possibility does remain that even a cleric could display the aforementioned "sickness" and thus in a Dionysian similarity not be a cleric at all.[59]

The priesthood is probably the most visible and notable example of ecclesiastical hierarchy for Cabasilas. It is not only divinely instituted, but at every sacramental gathering divinely enacted through mutual realization of the divinizing end of the ordained priesthood and the lay ecclesiastical participants. The priests have no sacramental power of their own, and do not sacramentally exist in a way separate from Christ. The activity of the priesthood does not depend on the individual sanctity of the priest because every sacramental realization is made possible through the priesthood of Christ. The human ecclesiastical hierarchy in this sense in no way exists separately from the priesthood of Christ. Consequently, the priesthood only exists, and is only necessary, in precisely its christologically linked and fulfilling role. That is not to suggest that the more pastoral aspects of hierarchy are not significant, but that these function differently in their communication of divinity in relation to the individual person than in the sacramental-liturgical context through the ministry of a priest. Cabasilas explains, "Thus the first Priest did, who before instituting the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist gave thanks to God his Father. So the celebrant, before the great prayer in the course of which will consecrate the holy offerings, addresses to God this act of thanksgiving."[60] The rationale behind what the priest does ritually is grounded in christological imitation. The priesthood's activity is an extension of and participation in Christ's priestly activity. According to Cabasilas,

> Such is the power of the priesthood; such is the Priest. For after once offering himself, and being made a sacrifice he did not end his priesthood, but is continually offering the sacrifice for us, by virtue of which he is our advocate before God forever. And therefore it is said of him: "Thou art a priest forever." This is why it is impossible for the faithful to be in any doubt about the consecration of the offerings or of the other mysteries, if they are carried out rightly and with the prayers of the priests.[61]

The sacraments do not depend on the worthiness of the priest but rather on his successful liturgical execution in a way that is christologically imitative and thereby participative. Determination of the priest acting authentically hierarchically depends on reciting the liturgically scripted prayers and functioning "rightly" in the context of liturgy. What exactly Cabasilas means by "rightly" in this context, however, remains ambiguous, and could leave the door open for a problematic type of liturgical analysis and anxiety. If, for instance, any deviation from the liturgical rubrics were made, or the prayers of the priests were not known to be successfully completed, then it seems that Cabasilas does leave room for the possibility that the divine communication of the liturgy might be impaired.

Not only is it the case that the lack of virtue of the priest is not in any way an impediment to the sacramental validity, but also that no amount of virtue makes anyone "sufficient to consecrate the offerings of sacraments."[62] Cabasilas explains clearly in this regard that

> none of the Apostles or teachers of the Church has ever appeared to say that they are sufficient to consecrate the offerings of sacraments. The blessed John himself said that, spoken once by Christ, and having actually been said by him, they are always effective, just as the word of the Creator is. But it is nowhere taught that now, spoken by the priest, and by reason of being said by him, they have that efficacy. In the same way the Creator's word is not effective because it is spoken by a man, applied to each particular case, but only because it was once spoken by the Lord.[63]

Cabasilas points to the infinite chasm between humanity and God, with humanity devoid of the ability to produce power, and God as the only true source of power. This chasm is bridged in the saving work and embodied

in the person of Jesus Christ. No human is sufficient or capable to bridge this chasm except the divine-human Christ, so that the sacramental mysteries are precisely divinizing because they participate in and are brought about by this completely unique and saving christological mystery. There is one power and that is a divine power. All human actions that appear to be powerful are only participants in this divine power, if indeed they are authentic. Taft's explanation of Christ in the Byzantine liturgy is reflective of Cabasilas's christologically oriented liturgical enterprise wherein "Jesus is not extraneous to the heavenly-earthly liturgy of the Church, he is its first protagonist as the Byzantine liturgy," and "in this theology Church ritual constitutes not only a representation but also a re-presentation—that is, a rendering present again, of the earthly saving work of Christ."[64] Cabasilas makes this "re-presentation" clear, explaining that it is precisely this divine communion, this activity of hierarchy for which Christ "came into the world, why he was made a sacrifice, why he died. This is why altars and priests and every purification and all the commandments, the teaching and the exhortations exist; all to the end that this holy table may be placed before us."[65] The hierarchy in the ordained priestly sense only exists and is divinely ordained in order to bring about divinization, to bring about divine-human communion.[66]

Realizing Hierarchy in Ritual

Cabasilas is notable in his historical context for drawing attention to liturgical participation as the means of participation in the divine life. In a Dionysian sense, Cabasilas figures the sacramental rites as hierarchy because he prominently describes them as foremost a means of communicating divinity.[67] For Cabasilas, the sacramental rituals necessitate a liturgical priesthood and presence of embodied lay hierarchy to realize the church as the Body of Christ. By the fourteenth century, seven sacraments were generally accepted in the Orthodox Church, but what they included varied. In his *Life in Christ*, Cabasilas reflects on the sacraments of baptism, chrismation, and Eucharist, but also includes reflection on the consecration of an altar as a significant additional rite. In the case of the historically proximate fifteenth-century Metropolitan Joasaph of Ephesus, the sacraments were listed as ten and included "the consecration of a church, the funeral service, and the monastic tonsure."[68] The mysteries, despite their historical variety, according to Cabasilas are the means by which

individuals participate in the priesthood of Christ and consequently in divinity.[69] It is through liturgical participation in the sacraments that Christians are united in divine union with Christ, and consequently have divine life. Cabasilas explains that through this participation "the members are joined to the head; they are alive because they are joined and die if they are separated . . . the members of Christ are more closely joined to Him than to their own head, and . . . it is even more by Him that they live than by their concord with it."[70] By this description, Cabasilas indicates what he means by divine participation and divine union—that it is life-giving. Drawing on Pauline marriage metaphor, Cabasilas explains that the union with Christ is life-giving and more natural and significant than connection to our own heads. Consequently, one can say that participation in the ecclesiastical hierarchy sacramentally and subsequently via the "institutionalized" hierarchy of the church is necessary for one to participate in the divine life. Cabasilas very strictly negates any access to divinization outside of the ecclesiastical hierarchic participation—which at least in his major works is envisioned primarily as sacramental participation—that is, participation in and constitution of the living Body of Christ.[71] It is the very means of divine life and the only divinely given access to it. In his discussion of baptism, Cabasilas makes this explicit, saying,

> Baptism confers being and in short, existence according to Christ. It receives us when we are dead and corrupted and first leads us into life. The anointing with chrism perfects him who has received [new] birth by infusing into him the energy that befits such a life. The Holy Eucharist preserves and continues this life and health, since the Bread of life enables us to preserve that which has been acquired and to continue in life. It is therefore by this Bread that we live and by the chrism that we are moved, once we have received being from the baptismal washing. In this way we live in God.[72]

If indeed "we live in God," then Cabasilas implies there is no other type of life. There is no life, authentic power, or means of divinization outside of the hierarchical participation. It is not only essential for life, it is life itself.[73]

Cabasilas's liturgical descriptions, interpretations, and commentary not only serve to remind sacramental participants of the divine reality in which they participate, but the liturgical "symbols" are in a Dionysian sense

divinely participative in and of themselves. Liturgy is not something that one participates in merely through intellectual contemplation, but the means by which its participants "imitate, as it were by a picture, by means of certain signs and symbols, the death which He truly died for the sake of our life, He renews and recreates by these very acts and makes them partakers of His own life."[74] Within the human imitation and representation of divine reality in ritual, God works to render liturgical participants as divine participants.[75] Cabasilas states explicitly that "the Church is represented in the holy mysteries, not in figure only, but as the limbs are represented in the heart, and the branches in the root, and, as our Lord has said, the shoots in the vine. For here is no mere sharing of a name, or analogy by resemblance, but an identity of actuality."[76] The whole hierarchy in its ritual manifestation, even with its earthly imperfection, is the means by which God divinizes His creation and unites them to his singular identity. Just because the imitation may fall short of the ideal, according to Cabasilas, is no justification for disregarding the signification and symbolism of the saving activity of Christ—which is self-sacrificing and self-emptying love. By focusing the entire liturgical sequence on the saving death of Christ and making the sacramental rites the means by which humans imitate and thereby participate in that death, Cabasilas indicates the authentic marker of hierarchy is in its likeness to the self-sacrificing and compassionate loving God.[77] The hierarchy of the "mysteries" indicates and reflects God as a sacrificial offering for others. For Cabasilas, this is the purest form of hierarchy, and spiritual authority and person-embodied hierarchy should reflect the same kenotic ideal. Cabasilas configures the attainment of the heights of the hierarchy as only possible through the self-abasement of sacrificial and humbling love.[78]

The liturgical sacramental rites are the means of divinity being given to humanity, and for Cabasilas, this model of hierarchy is necessarily inequitable from the top down. With God as the source, and humans ever unworthy, hierarchy is the means of divine participation without destroying the freedom of the individual or the particularity of each individual's vocation.[79] God is the one offering the order of hierarchy that brings about divine union. Cabasilas explains that "God's supreme loving-kindness and goodness towards mankind, which is the divine virtue and righteousness . . . has provided us with these entrances [meaning the mysteries] into heaven," showing that the liturgical rites that are fundamentally hierarchical both in the divinely communicative and the institutionalized clerical senses are

reflective of, and originate in, God's self-emptying love toward an undeserving humanity.[80] Through the sacraments, God provides humanity the means to communicate and participate in divine power.

The priest in the liturgical context is unable to accomplish anything authentically hierarchical unless he is acting with power via participating in Christ. Cabasilas corrects any notion that a priest can perform or act in any way apart from Christ, ritually speaking, and still be a priest. As was mentioned previously, the priesthood of the ecclesiastical ministers is not derivative of, but solely constituted by, participation in Christ's priesthood.[81] It is not as if there was some human construction or floating unhypostasized priesthood available to human men by virtue of a ritual act. Christ is the origin, preservation, and perfection of every sacramental act. As such, much like Maximus, when Cabasilas speaks about the priest or hierarch performing the ritual actions, the distinction between the human priest and the divine efficacy is simultaneously and in some sense iconographically obscured and revealed. For example, when Cabasilas describes the baptism of a catechumen, he says that the "celebrant breathes into his (the catechumen's) face, for the inbreathing from above is a symbol of life."[82] The celebrant's action actually communicates the divine reality, because the priest or hierarch acts as Christ liturgically.[83] Consequently, every action of the celebrant in the liturgy (at least performed "rightly") is a divine action that mediates and manifests the divinizing reality of the Body of Christ. Cabasilas clearly explains that the liturgical participant should view the ritual actions—"those dictated by necessity as well as those which are consciously symbolic"—as a "dramatization of Christ's sufferings and death." The result of this type of ritual interpretation is that everything the priest does liturgically is taken to be divinely communicative and therefore hierarchical.[84] Cabasilas includes as divinely revelatory, not only the symbolic ritual actions, but even those "dictated by necessity." To what precisely this phrase refers is ambiguous, but it appears to leave open the possibility for liturgical adaptation in a way that is still divinely communicative. It also elevates every ritually performed action of the priest—even those that may be unintentional or seemingly liturgically irrelevant—as potentially divinely communicative based on the divine power invoked by and attributed to the priest during the liturgical celebration as a function of his office.

Cabasilas emphasizes that the actions performed by the priest are brought about by Christ himself. Thus, the dramatization of Christ iconographically

through ritual action and symbol is not distinct from the divinizing participation the participants have ritually in Christ himself. Cabasilas explains that "it is Christ Himself who initiates us in His Mysteries; He Himself is the content of the mysteries. Likewise it is He who preserves His gifts in us."[85] This breakdown of the ritual action mirrors that of Dionysian hierarchy, wherein Christ is shown to be the origin, activity, and end of every hierarchy. With Cabasilas, Christ is the initiator, content, and preservation of every liturgical mystery. By both the words and actions of the priest, Cabasilas indicates that, "no means of presentation is omitted in the endeavor to express the meaning" of the "death of the Lord" liturgically, so that the "meaning" is fundamentally the determining content of ecclesiastical hierarchy.[86] In light of this interpretive approach to liturgy, Alexander Schmemann refers to Cabasilas as the culmination of "the gradual development in the explanation of the Eucharist as a sacramental representation of Christ's life, an explanation which acquired tremendous popularity in Byzantium," suggesting that the liturgy is dangerously taken as a primarily symbolic narrative performance. It is not the case, however, that this liturgical representation by Cabasilas is anything short of hierarchically participative in divine power because it efficaciously communicates the truth of divinity iconographically and sacramentally.[87]

Cabasilas configures the liturgical context as that which brings about assimilation between the priest and Christ. It is the divinely revealed scripted-ness of the liturgy that makes the rituals at the level of human hierarchical ministration divinely communicative. Cabasilas explains the repeated affirmation "for thine is the power, thine the kingdom" in a way that reveals the relation between hierarchical action and divine power. He expounds that when this prayer is offered, the priest means "Glory is the property of kings . . . and they have power to render glorious whomsoever they will. You are the eternal King, and power and dominion are yours. This reason, which is in itself a doxology, is proclaimed in a loud voice to all the faithful."[88] The act of the priest offering up and acknowledging that true power and glory belong with God alone, and the scripted repeated affirmation of this by the lay participants, ascribes and affirms all power as residing with God even while liturgically it might look as if the ministers are powerful. Cabasilas's explanation of this prayer reveals an interpretation of divine glory precisely in the activity of making others glorious. God's power is in sharing that power to make humans powerful through divinization. Power resides in giving power away.

Although Cabasilas negates any priestly action apart from the action of Christ, he also acknowledges the liturgical structures that are in themselves hierarchical to make manifest this priestly simultaneous "dissimilar similarity" between the human and divine priest.[89] Cabasilas acknowledges the liturgical context as authentically reflective of Christ and actively transformative for the ecclesial participants into more accurate icons of Christ. This is particularly evident in his brief remarks on the vestments of the deacons, priests, and bishops—where he connects the significance of the liturgical vesture of the clergy to their hierarchical activity. The vesture is indicative of activity among and for humans, and visibly by humans, but ultimately divinely brought to perfecting completion. Distinctly for Cabasilas, the vestments bring about the divine reality in the spiritual transfiguring of both the hierarch and those who view him.[90] Cabasilas emphasizes the liturgical components as divinizing activity when he comments on the prescribed liturgical psalms and scripture readings in the liturgy as actively working to bring about interior similitude with the liturgically externalized divine ideal. Regarding the prescribed liturgical psalms and scripture readings—which perhaps do not seem overly communicative of a divinizing reality—Cabasilas explains:

> All these things, which make the soul of both priest and people better and more divine, make them fit for the reception and preservation of the holy mysteries, which is the aim of liturgy. Especially, they put the priest in a proper frame of mind for the accomplishment of the sacrifice, which is, as has been said, the essential part of the mystagogy. This intention can be seen in many parts of the prayers: the priest prays that he be not judged unworthy to perform so great an act, but that he may devote himself to the sacrifice with pure hands, a pure heart, and a pure tongue. Thus it is that we are aided in the celebration by the very virtue of the words themselves, said or sung.[91]

The words themselves, not only the actions of the liturgical rites, manifest the ideal while working to conform the human reality to it. Cabasilas does not negate that these hymns have additional significance, but rather he explains that their primary function is preparatory and cathartic, saying, "We have, it is true, ascribed another purpose to these chants and readings—they act as a purification and preparation for the holy mysteries—but nothing prevents them from serving in both capacities; these acts at one and the same time sanctify the faithful and symbolize the scheme of

redemption."[92] The laity is not expected to view the priest as a pure icon of Christ alone, but rather as a simultaneous icon of Christ and a dynamic icon of the posture of man receiving Christ. To Taft's observation that "the church and its iconography come alive only during the actual liturgical celebration; only then does the mirror of the mysteries being celebrated reflect its true dynamic, at once earthly and heavenly, in the liturgy of the communion of saints," it might be added that, in Cabasilas's case, the "reflection" of the true dynamic between heaven and earth in the liturgy is the transfigurative communication of divinity.[93] Just as Christ, and any hierarch according to Dionysius, embodies the entire hierarchy below it, so liturgically for Cabasilas the priest or hierarch functions symbolically and authentically as indicating the divine condescension and divinizing ascent of humanity through Christ.

Cabasilas recognizes humanity's fallen-ness from the divine ideal and christological reality in the script of the liturgical rites, which serve hierarchically to communicate divinity precisely as pure sacrificial love given in compassionate condescension. Cabasilas explains that the priest, "prays that he may always be held worthy to perform this act [the liturgy] with a pure heart," which is simultaneously a glorification of God. He continues in this explanation by adding that the priest prays "that he may conduct himself without reproach at the altar, free from any stain of body or soul, and, that the faithful who pray with him may be made worthy to partake in the holy mysteries without guilt or reproach, and also that they may have a share in the kingdom of heaven."[94] This prayer is ordered ritually regardless of the priests' personal worthiness or unworthiness, because it witnesses to the glory of God in His loving condescension toward humankind. No human priest is worthy, but at the same time, this sort of compassionate and humble admission is precisely that which makes the priest divinely reflective.

The Body of Christ, which Cabasilas claims the liturgy realizes among the liturgical participants, is necessarily simultaneously stratifying and equalizing. He summarizes the Divine Liturgy by saying that, "the whole celebration of the mystery is like a unique portrayal of a single body, which from beginning to end preserves its order and harmony, so that each ceremony, each prayer, adds something to the whole," referring not only to the ecclesiastical participants as part of the hierarchical body, but as the rites and their components as well.[95] Hierarchy for Cabasilas is thus the revelation of, and participation in, the orderly and harmonious Body of

Christ. In order for there to be harmony, there must be difference. For there to be divine reflection, there must be order. These contrasting convergences imply condescension and voluntary subordination as foremost divinely reflective attributes.[96]

Hierarchy in Praxis

At the level of practical application of the hierarchic ideal, Cabasilas provides a model of christologically grounded priesthood that spans beyond the clerically ordained priestly ranks. Emphasizing the significance of the laity's prayers during the liturgy as fulfilling hierarchic activity, Cabasilas explains that Christ brings about "at one and same time . . . the consecration of the offerings by this priest, their transformation into this victim, and their carrying up to the heavenly altar," so that if someone (even a layperson) prays that "any one of these things come to pass . . . you possess that for which you pray and you have accomplished the sacrifice."[97] The liturgical participation in Christ is not brought about or dependent on the priest alone. To the extent that participants offer themselves to God they have accomplished the sacrifice—that is, they have participated in the saving passion of Christ and are divine participants even as lay persons. Although Cabasilas focuses his liturgical contemplation and commentary primarily in terms of the priesthood and the liturgical actions, as Constantine Tsirpanlis observes, the laity are not "mere spectators at the Eucharist" but rather function hierarchically in a "primarily and essentially . . . priestly vocation."[98]

In addition to the laity's hierarchical priestly function, Cabasilas also ranks the martyrs as a special type of priesthood because "they have body, spirit, manner of death, and all other things in common with Christ." Consequently, during the rite of consecrating a church, the hierarch should treat the relics of the martyrs with the same manner "he would use if he were bringing in Christ Himself, and perform the other acts in the same way as he would honor the Holy Gifts."[99] The martyrs, Christ, and Eucharistic gifts are all equated in this description because they are all divinely communicative and reflective through complete and unreserved offerings given in humbled forms. Each of these elements is not ontologically equal, but to the extent that they are fundamentally hierarchical, Cabasilas asserts they should be reverenced and honored as the hierarch Christ Himself. From Cabasilas's flexibility in this instance, one could

perhaps more boldly conclude that whatever or whoever reflects Christ authentically should be reverenced as the hierarch himself regardless of humanly acknowledged ecclesiastical rank or position.

Cabasilas describes sacramental participation in terms of participating in the Body of Christ such that liturgical participation is divine participation if one voluntarily chooses to live united to Christ. The efficacy of the sacraments for an individual depends on the voluntary submission of that person to the christological and hierarchical head—Christ. The power of the sacraments is always offered, but cannot be accessed aside from union with Christ. He explains: "As long as we remain united to him [meaning Christ] and preserve our connection with him, we live by holiness, drawing to ourselves, through the holy mysteries, the sanctity which comes from that Head and that Heart. But if we should cut ourselves off, if we should separate ourselves from the unity of this most holy Body, we partake of the holy mysteries in vain, for life cannot flow into dead and amputated limbs."[100] Cabasilas thus accounts for the possibility of sacramental participants who remain spiritually unenlivened by the sacraments due to their interior separation from Christ and a life of holiness.[101] Cabasilas acknowledges the possibility of cutting oneself off from the Body of Christ while still being a ritual participant in the Eucharist. The life one has in Christ through sacramental participation, however, is dependent on a union of holiness that is constituted by one's life and actions beyond the ritual context. This twofold account of divine union reflects a hierarchical relationship and manifestation of divine power that spans beyond the ecclesial gathering in which one is united to and subject to the Divine Head of Christ sacramentally. Cabasilas thus accounts for the possibility of ineffective sacramental participation based on human willful separation from the humble self-giving and other-serving power of Christ. The divinization offered through ritual participation in the sacraments is limited by the degree an individual refuses to embody the power of Christ in self-giving and voluntary submission to God. For Cabasilas, divine participation necessitates Christ-like humility be adopted to remove the humanly conceived self and make room for the divinely given image.

Despite his acknowledgment of the possibility of the sacraments being ineffectual based on individual spiritual disposition and internal excommunication, Cabasilas also affirms that the personal piety of the priest does not affect the efficacy of the sacraments. He explains that any lack of holiness on the behalf of the priest in no way jeopardizes the validity of the

sacraments because the priest is not "sovereign" over the mysteries, but Christ is. Cabasilas locates power with God alone, presumably to dispel the notion that the priest himself possessed power associated with his specific person. Consequently, it is grace that sanctifies the offering, not the human minister—and this grace is dependent on God not on man.[102] Cabasilas emphasizes that the divinizing activity of sacramental participation is not diminished by unworthy ministers for its participants because the "The holy gifts are offered twice; the first offering is made by the faithful, who place their gifts in the hands of the priests; the second is made by the Church to God."[103] Ultimately, the offering is made by Christ who is the only sovereign of the mysteries. In addition to locating the power of the offering with Christ, Cabasilas also explains that the sacraments are protected in their validity by being offered by the priesthood of the people—that is, by the lay liturgical participants. Cabasilas thus does much to remove any doubt someone might have about the holiness and divinizing authenticity of the sacraments based on the personal character and divine reflectivity of a human priestly minister.

Compared to the ascetic hesychast's immediate experience of holiness as reality, the potentially visible unworthiness of priest and participant were likely justifications for avoiding the chalice and doubting the efficacy of the sacraments during Cabasilas's lifetime. Cabasilas, however, treats the problem of unworthy priests directly, and defends his position of the sacraments as divinizing, saying,

> But, you will say, the priests who make the offerings are not always good men; some of them are guilty of the worst vices; so we are in the same doubt as we were before. . . . Such arguments might be justified, and such doubts legitimate, if one regarded the priest as sovereign lord of the offering of the gifts; but he is not. . . . He brings to it nothing of his own, he would not dare to do or say anything according to his own judgment and reason. He offers only that which he has already received, whether it be matter, word or action, back to God, in the manner which is laid down. . . . What does it matter then if, as far as he himself is concerned, the offerer is a wicked man? His wickedness cannot alter the offerings, nor contaminate the act of offering.[104]

Of particular note in this instance is that Cabasilas makes clear that the priest offers nothing of his own, or should offer nothing of his own, because

he is only acting and speaking in a liturgically scripted way. If the priest deviated from this liturgical protocol, the conclusion Cabasilas draws regarding the validity of the sacrament might be slightly different. In such an instance, the priest could potentially be acting contrary to his divinely empowered office if he intentionally alters the service instead of submitting himself to the received tradition. Although Cabasilas does affirm that in all cases the priest serves as "only a minister" and as such offers things that "are always accepted by God," presumably these offerings should be offered in the properly divinely revealed way—that is, through proper liturgical execution—or at least divinely reflective liturgical execution so that any deviation is done in a way that still produces the power of Christ's saving economy. This would provide a caveat for errors made with a still christologically reflective interior and externalized approach, such as in the case of unintentional errors of liturgical order, but Cabasilas does not address this point further.[105]

Despite Cabasilas's affirmation of the priesthood's validity in the sacramental-liturgical context, wherein the worthiness of the priest is irrelevant to the sanctity of the offering, the personal worthiness of the ordained clergy and ecclesiastical leadership is nevertheless significant for recognizing any nonliturgical spiritual authority. In his *Discourse Concerning Illegal Acts of Officials Daringly Committed Against Things Sacred,* which rebukes clergy for selling clerical offices and other apparent sacerdotal injustices, Cabasilas follows a longstanding Byzantine canonical tradition by immediately limiting the rights of ordained clerics to the locations wherein they fulfill their divinely called activities as priests and bishops.[106] A bishop, for example, only has the authorities and privileges of a bishop in the city where he may act as one liturgically by sitting in a bishop's throne—thus, again, drawing on the theological concept of hierarchical validation through divinizing activity.[107] Speaking to a specific problem of a metropolitan demanding fees and land beyond his jurisdiction, Cabasilas identifies the issue both as one of greed, and also as one of misuse of his rank and neglect of his hierarchic calling for a lesser one. Cabasilas explains that "the apostles appointed deacons for administering material needs, so that they themselves might attend to matters spiritual. The defendant does the opposite. How can his teachings appear convincing to his flock if his faithful consider him a violator of the law, and see that his actions contradict his preaching? This is a demoralizing situation, which brings religion and the priesthood into disrepute. The defendant acts like

a general, who, forsaking his station, attends to menial tasks, and thus causes ruin to both himself and his soldiers."[108] Cabasilas continues by clarifying that spiritual leaders rely on persuasion alone to lead others, rather than force, so that a good reputation is paramount. Citing John Chrysostom, he explains that those who disregard their good reputation "will meet with greater punishment, inasmuch as their evil reputation will harm a greater number of people."[109] The reputation is key to authentic leadership—or, in more hierarchical terms, communicating the image of God in the pastoral domain is what determines authority in that domain. Cabasilas makes this subjectivity of authority explicit where he says that the aforementioned metropolitan is "superior to others only insofar as he appears as the imitator of Christ and the continuator of the way laid down by the apostles and their successors."[110] Essentially, the metropolitan's authority is only legitimate to the extent that he manifests the divine image through submission to others and is in continuity with those who have been recognized as doing so in accepted tradition.

The clerics only have authority and subsequent superiority over others to the extent that they imitate and therefore communicate Christ.[111] Accordingly, priests can, and should, break communion with bishops who openly transgress the law because, in Cabasilas's view, then they are no longer bishops.[112] By again reflecting a divinely determined conception of hierarchy, Cabasilas is able to set the boundaries of legitimacy for spiritual authority and hierarchic superiority based on the hierarch being divinely communicative. This construction of valid spiritual authority culminates in Cabasilas's claim that "as important as the priesthood is for our salvation, it is better that there be no priests at all, than to have priests who do harm to their flock by causing themselves to be hated."[113] Indeed, any action that causes the faithful to perceive a conflict between the image of Christ and the individual person results in a negation of the cleric's spiritual authority.[114] Authority rests in manifesting divine power and the power of divine likeness. Cabasilas explains that, unlike secular power, spiritual power relies on persuasion by communicating the divine image authentically. In claiming this distinction, Cabasilas again locates the theological justification for spiritual and ecclesiastical authority in divinizing activity.[115] Cabasilas links the validity of the priestly office and the spiritual authority exercised therein to the reflection of God's will among humanity while the "devil" subverts the authority of the priestly office by making it a means of injustice.[116] Ihor Ševčenko notes that Cabasilas makes the distinction

that a good official "acts within the law for the benefit of his subjects, and shows respect for their human dignity and liberty" while a tyrant "is interested solely in his own advantage, safety, and pleasure; enslaves his subjects and disregards the laws."[117] The good official in Cabasilas's view is one that manifests christological imitation through condescending service and love, while the tyrant trying to empower him or herself is actually divesting himself of power and authority. The distinction between a good priest in a position of spiritual authority and a poor one is in regard to personal and pastoral manifestations of the divine image as merciful and just. With these qualities Cabasilas provides some specificity to what makes the divine likeness recognizable in a hierarchical leader.[118]

Elsewhere in his anti-Zealot treatise, Cabasilas responds to the question of whether or not subordinates to an improperly functioning metropolitan should still obey him, and Cabasilas responds negatively. He explains that when the metropolitan acts "unlawfully," he no longer has any authority. Instead "the law requires priests immediately to break communion with bishops who openly transgress the law" and "in this case, the law calls for no trial, and treats the transgressing defendant as it does the heretic."[119] The hierarch loses authority whenever he is no longer representing the divine law but some other law. The metropolitan, by lacking divine similitude, lacks hierarchical authority. Those who otherwise should be subordinate to him are freed from obedience because the metropolitan does not possess any authority on his own—that is, apart from the authority of his communion with and ability to communicate Christ. Cabasilas observes in this case that no trial is warranted. It is as if the reflectivity of the divine likeness does not need to be tried, but rather should be clearly apparent and transformative to those surrounding and subordinate to the one who is functioning hierarchically. This ease of recognition could be problematic in practice, in instances where perhaps there may be a debate over whether or not the hierarch is divinely reflective. Cabasilas, however, does not entertain this possibility. Consistent with his emphasis on the church as the living Body of Christ, Cabasilas presumes recognition of Christ-likeness would be obvious and unanimously affirmed by those who are authentically hierarchical by locating Christ's divine power within Christ's living ecclesiastical body. By invoking the comparison to a heretic, Cabasilas points to the fundamental difference between heresy and hierarchy as being the former's incorrect—and therefore inauthentic and unable to bring about divine-human communion—obstinate belief about who and how God is.

If we take the majority of Cabasilas's extant writings to have been composed during his time as a layman, then the practical question arises: From where does his authority to rebuke bishops in such a pronounced way and offer liturgical interpretation come? More specifically, what does his ability to do so indicate about his hierarchical theology? Hagiographically speaking, Cabasilas is remembered in the Byzantine tradition as a mystic, likely based on his liturgical commentaries, but the origins of this classification are unclear.[120] Cabasilas's early eulogy on St. Demetrios and its controversial reception and subsequent revision clearly indicate that Cabasilas was in a position where even as a student his theological writings were prominently received. Indicative of this is the fact that Cabasilas was himself rebuked by his uncle and patriarch for a confusion of hierarchical order by seeming to rank Demetrios ahead of John the Forerunner in sanctity.[121] Is it simply through social connection that Cabasilas finds himself in a position of authority, or is it indicative of his christologically corporeal hierarchical vision more broadly? If we take the latter approach, then Cabasilas can speak with authority because he speaks not on his own behalf but on behalf of the christologically realized ecclesiastical body in which he is a divine participant. As he grounds himself in tradition and liturgical participation, he has authority to write and speak of such things because of his christological likeness. This likeness is not in the pastoral leadership of others, or liturgical ministration, but in being a member of the Body of Christ. In this way, Cabasilas offers a startlingly brilliant resource for the authority of lay piety and theologians as authoritative not by virtue of the personal office, but by virtue of the recognizable christological witness they offer in their ministries to, and on behalf of, the church.

Conclusion

Cabasilas collapses sacramental participation with divine participation so that the ecclesiastical hierarchy is primarily figured as the Body of Christ. By constructing hierarchy in this way, Cabasilas reflects the Dionysian ideal of hierarchy as divine communication and determined by divinizing activity. Cabasilas's own christological emphasis on the liturgical participation as divinely communicative and divinizing renders it hierarchical and allows him to make a distinction between authority in the context of the liturgy and the spiritual authority offered by individuals outside of the sacramental context. In the latter context, hierarchy as divinely communicative

order and authority is legitimated only to the extent that it reveals and communicates christological likeness. Cabasilas figures this likeness primarily as self-sacrificial love, compassion, and justice. Those who do not reveal these characteristics are devoid of authority beyond their liturgically scripted functions. Much like Stethatos, when a hierarch or priest is not divinely imitative, then the authority of such a hierarch or priest is jeopardized because he is no longer participating in or mediating divine power. Consequently, the obedience of those who would be subordinate to such a spiritually impotent leader is no longer required.

The liturgical hierarchical construction Cabasilas offers does much in the way of protecting the validity of the sacraments and liturgical worship. By situating the only true power with the person and Body of Christ, Cabasilas offers a theological model where lack of divine likeness among the priesthood or participants is not a valid excuse to avoid liturgical participation. Likewise, a personal opinion of the minister as unworthy or disagreeable is not valid for questioning or avoiding sacramental participation. Christ as the liturgical actor, and one who offers, validates, and perfects the sacraments, covers any apparent faults of those doing the offering. Cabasilas primarily draws on the scripted nature of the liturgy in allaying participants' concerns, so that the validity of the sacrament seems a bit tenuous if offered in a way inconsistent with what has been traditionally and divinely ordered. Presumably the sacraments would still be sanctified even in instances of priestly liturgical anomalies because they are also being offered by the lay participants and because Christ is the primary liturgical actor. Thus, Cabasilas prompts historical and contemporary reconsideration of reasons for avoiding liturgical participation and the relationship between priestly and sacramental mediation of divine power. Additionally, Cabasilas configures the liturgy itself as divinely communicative, not merely a dramatic representation but as accomplishing and realizing the Body of Christ on earth.

The pastoral application of the hierarchical construction Cabasilas offers thus reflects the dynamic present in Dionysius's ecclesiastical hierarchy, wherein participation in the hierarchy and subordination to it are required for divine communion. For Cabasilas, the one who is in a position of authority, but is not fulfilling the divine activity, or is not recognizably Christ-like, is not actually authoritative in that position. The question then arises: How could subordinates legitimately negate the supposed authority of a spiritual father if they thought he was no longer

hierarchical (that is, divinely reflective and communicative) without jeopardizing their own hierarchical activity? Put more plainly, who and how can one judge the christological likeness of those in positions of spiritual authority? For Dionysius, it is clearly only those parallel or higher than the person in question, but in Cabasilas's example the priests do not have to obey a hierarch who is no longer divinely reflective. This shift could open the door for a type of ecclesiological anarchy and relativity, or could be the very flexibility necessary for the hierarchy to always be self-reflective concerning its divine likeness. The shift here is very significant for present day and historical conceptions of spiritual authority, and the Dionysian limitations are reconfigured in a way that gives more autonomy to the subordinates as recognizers of authentic christological likeness. The key to presumably avoiding such dissolution of the hierarchical order completely is again the corporeality of the Body of Christ. The priests and monks to whom Cabasilas refers the comments about rejecting the authority of those who do not reveal Christ in their actions are assumed to be themselves proper participants in the Body of Christ. Therefore, there is an assumption of the legitimacy of the ecclesial recognition and decision—a type of self-recognition of Christ-likeness. Indeed, this is ambiguous and abstract in description, but for Cabasilas presumably the only trustworthy means of divine recognition. This type of subversion of authority then is predicated on the legitimacy of the christological body doing the rejection and the relocation of all power and authority to the divine head of this body. Cabasilas does not entertain the historical ecclesiastical situation, for example, that confronted Maximus, wherein both ecclesiastical leadership and community were in error, which leaves Cabasilas open to greater critique. Cabasilas's distinction in pastoral hierarchical authority calls into question the authority held by ecclesiastical leaders outside of the liturgical context—not by virtue of their ordination or office, but by virtue of their communication of divine likeness and power. This reading of Cabasilas undoubtedly would be humbling to those in roles of ecclesiastical leadership and perhaps even troubling to their own sense of authority and to those who recognize them. For one who was so grounded in the institutionalized ecclesiastical structures of his day, Cabasilas offers authoritative power to the people to evaluate and negate the authority of their leaders, based on the extension of christological likeness to all aspects of their office (not just liturgical).

CHAPTER

5

Thearchical Power in Theory and Practice

The Byzantine authors of the previous four chapters rely upon a common assumption about power and authority in order to develop and negotiate hierarchy in a way that is consistent with Orthodoxy. Each author limits the authority of the visible earthly hierarchy and its individual members when its participants are not believed to communicate divinity. Moreover, Dionysius, Maximus, Stethatos, and Cabasilas directly and indirectly identify power as residing in the relational activity of communicating divinity rather than inhering in a particular office or human person based on ecclesiastical position. What remains, however, is to theorize how the Byzantine conception of hierarchy indicated by these four authors relates to and suggests a uniquely Orthodox theory of power. Consequently, in this chapter I offer a cumulative reflective analysis of power as indicated in the preceding chapters and posit that Byzantines (and subsequently Orthodox theology more generally) identify power with divinity, describe this divine power as paradoxical in nature, and construct hierarchy as the appropriate means of mediating and participating in true power. The interpretation of power I suggest is not a central focus in the writings of any of the Byzantine authors I have previously presented. No author has a treatise on power explicitly, likely because the power suppositions on which they are able to theorize and negotiate hierarchy are implicit and unchallenged in Orthodox discourse. Consequently, in this chapter I engage a broader framing of power to present a way of interpreting the relationship between hierarchy and power that is supported by the four case studies in Byzantine theology. Giving priority to divinely origi-

native (thearchical) power—rather than providing an additional overidealized framework of ecclesiastical administration—provides a foundation for previously unsynthesized yet historically sanctified ways of rereading the often-problematic power dynamics of the Orthodox Church.

A Thearchical Theory of Power

Dionysius, Maximus, Stethatos, and Cabasilas successfully theorize, describe, and negotiate hierarchy in diverse ways because they display varying shades of two foundational commitments: that God alone is the source of all power, and that, to the extent that any power is authentic, it is divine. Despite God's ontological dominance (wherein lies the potential to achieve anything), God reveals Godself to humanity as powerful through self-emptying love. This self-giving is the manifestation of God's omnipotence, wherein God invites human participation through condescension and gives himself to others in order to make others (his creation, his servants) powerful by participating in his undiminishing power (the power over death, etc.).[1] God's power is manifest by sustaining others and embracing them. These Byzantine authors attribute all power to the divine Father while negating the possibility of any divine struggle to maintain or balance that power. At the human level there is a unidirectional struggle to "have" power. This struggle is often marked by abuses within ecclesiastical administrations, and clerics who are motivated by self-aggrandizement and gaining control over others. For the Byzantines, however, power is not something any human person can "have" except through divine participation and imitation. By maintaining God as the ultimate source and agent of all power, Byzantine theologians render human power struggles in terms of temporality, illusion, and ultimately futility. Power within the church, the ecclesiastical body, and the living community of ecclesiastical participants is produced through relational exchanges whereby humans either participate in or reject the power of God through divine likeness. God alone, however, is the true sovereign origin, or "ἀρχή" of all power.[2]

God as the singular source of power is the foundation by means of which the community participates in any authentic and therefore authoritative power via human activity. Dionysius most obviously makes this claim employing the word "thearchy" (θεαρχία) to describe the triune Godhead as the source of all being and power.[3] He constructs hierarchy as a divine outpouring where God is the "omnipotent foundation of everything" and is

the only all-powerful.[4] Similarly, according to Maximus, God as the source of all power is necessarily "infinitely beyond every essence, power, and act" and yet it is through these divine powers and acts that humans know God.[5] Divine power is a unified and yet diversely manifest reality from which the hierarchy flows and takes its divinely reflective form. Maximus explains this with a trinitarian reference that the "power of the divinity is one, and . . . there is one God contemplated in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," referring to the Divine archetype for a stratified yet unified hierarchical model enlivened by a singular divine power.[6] There is but one power, divine power. The power humans experience is the divine power within the Body of Christ by divine participation. Cabasilas likewise stresses the singular nature of the power acting within the ecclesiastical Body of Christ and through the sacraments. He explains that "the priesthood is nothing other than a ministerial power over sacred things" but also that "Grace works all." The priesthood has no power of its own; it only is empowered in serving others by mediating the power of Christ.[7] Yet, the Byzantines (for example, Maximus) also affirm the active power of the living ecclesial Body of Christ as deified human participation in the divine.[8] The power and the ecclesial Body are not arbitrarily constructed or dual in competing ways. As Maximus's Christology attests, the active power within Christ's body is unified and divine but also requires the assent and cooperation of the naturally human properties (in this case participants). Power, in this sense, is mediated and produced in the relations of the members of the hierarchy. As Dionysius constructs it, and as others subsequently adopt it, God is both the head of and the power within the hierarchy.

For the Byzantines God is the source of all power, and God communicates this power to humanity. Consequently, all power comes from God, and yet appears in a paradoxically undiminishable and kenotic form. Dionysius provides one example of interpreting this foundational claim by stating that "God's infinite power is distributed among all things and there is nothing in the world entirely bereft of power," and that only "total deprivation (of God) means total powerlessness."[9] Dionysius attributes all power (even when interpreted in the most basic terms of being able to do something) among creation to God. Dionysius describes God as having "power over all" and as being "in total control of the world," but he pairs this description with an explanation that God is called omnipotent "because he is the goal of all yearning and because he lays a happy yoke on all who wish it, the sweet toil of that holy, omnipotent, and indestructible yearn-

ing for his goodness."[10] The yearning for goodness and toil in holiness are precisely empowering participation in divine omnipotence.

God's power over all is affirmed theologically, but humans know, experience, and recognize it as an invitation to holiness among those who are otherwise powerless. Thus, Byzantine theologians routinely describe God's power in terms of condescension and serving love for those who are unworthy. Christ, Maximus says, "is crucified for those who are still beginners in the practice of virtue," and this makes it possible for humans to become participants in divine grace and be ranked "high above every principality and power, virtue, and domination, and every name that can be given either in this age or in the one to come. For everything which is less than God, things and names and dignities will be subject to the one who has come to be God through grace."[11] With this statement Maximus explains that God shares power with even those just beginning "the practice of virtue" through his kenotic crucifixion to elevate humans through grace as much as possible to the same empowered state as Godself. Stethatos likewise describes divine power in terms of originating and flowing from a singular divine source, and attributes any ability to conquer sin to "power from on high."[12] Both Maximus and Stethatos describe God as giving power so that humans may become more like the one who is all powerful. Cabasilas likewise explains that "The Master is present with His servants. . . . He imparts of His own. He not only gives them a hand, but He has given us His whole Self. Wherefore we are the temple of the living God; our members are Christ's members whose Head the Cherubim adore. These very feet, these hands, depend on His heart."[13] This pouring out of power from a singular source in and upon others is the model of divine power, and therefore the model of all power.

The dominant agent of power, who is divine, is one who gives power away to make those seemingly beneath Him powerful. In so doing, God in no way jeopardizes His own power, but renders himself more glorious because of this condescending activity. Maximus explains that Christ's victory is one executed through "weakness," calling the events of the incarnation a "paradoxical war," intimating the inversion of human expectations of power with the revelation of God. Maximus continues to explain that "Paul was weak as to himself, yet boasted in his infirmities that the power of Christ might dwell in him," suggesting that the divine form of power is made accessible to humans through divinely imitative voluntary relinquishing of power.[14] Similarly, Stethatos explains that God creates and "sends

the Holy Spirit to endow them [creatures] with power"—that is, the power to be united with Godself.[15] Stethatos makes clear that the power sustaining creation is none other than God himself given to creation. In the same tradition, Cabasilas describes God alone as the source of all power and implies that this power is manifest in the rendering glorious of others. Cabasilas elaborates on the power and glory of God's condescension that

> not only did He endure the most terrible pains and die from His wounds, but also, after He came to life and raised up His body from corruption, He still retained those wounds. He bears the scars upon His body and with them appears to the eyes of the angels; He regards them as an ornament and rejoices to show how He suffered terrible things. . . . He saw fit to cherish them because of His affection for man. . . . He had the desire to suffer pain for us many times over.[16]

Cabasilas's interpretation of power cannot be divorced from the divine model and source of power that celebrates and cherishes voluntary suffering in service of others who are unworthy. Cabasilas further develops his theology of the glory and power of God when he explains in the liturgy where the priest "asks that they (those bringing the offerings and praying) in their turn may be glorified by God; giving immediately a fitting reason: 'For thine is the power, thine the kingdom.' Glory is the property of kings, he seems to say, and they have power to render glorious whomsoever they will. You are the eternal King, and power and dominion are yours."[17] Power belongs to God, and yet the liturgical prayer reveals God offers this power to humanity, making God all the more glorious. For Cabasilas, power is manifest in the transfiguration of others by giving power away. In sum, each of the Byzantine authors affirms God as the sole originator of power and balances this with the self-giving of God to humanity in order to render humans powerful through divinization.

As the Byzantine authors characterize divine power as self-emptying power, they also reiterate that human hierarchical participants are called as divine participants to manifest and mediate this power in divinely imitative self-giving. In his monastic instructions, Stethatos explains that service and putting aside the self is divinely reflective. He says:

> If while you are singing a song of prayer to God, one of your brethren knocks at the door of your cell, do not opt for the work of prayer rather than that of love and ignore your brother, for so to act would

> be alien to God. God desires love's mercy, not the sacrifice of prayer. Rather, put aside the gift of prayer and speak with healing love to your brother. Then with tears and a contrite heart once more offer your gift of prayer to the Father of the spiritual powers, and a righteous spirit will be renewed within you.[18]

God's power is manifest when one negates one's self for the sake of serving another. Stethatos in his description of his teacher Symeon the New Theologian likewise refers to him as having "Christ-like humility," emphasizing the humility of Christ is something glorious.[19] The powerful agent, the omnipotent God "over" humanity is praised exceedingly as the humble divine servant of humanity. Cabasilas explains imitation of this self-acknowledged lowliness is the purpose of doxology, wherein "we lay aside ourselves and all our interests and glorify the Lord for his own sake, for his power and glory."[20] Praising God as alone powerful produces a Christian subject that is empowered precisely through negation of self-power.[21] By locating power with God alone, Stethatos makes authority legitimate only when power is used in a way that reflects God in self-emptying. This Byzantine thearchical theorization of power asserts that participation in God's power is different from any type of interpretation involving human systems or agents. With the ascription of every real power to the divine power, there is a continuous giving away of power that is never diminished within its divine source. Power is realized not through or over others, but in service to and loving relationship with others. Cabasilas explains that God "made use of things which were contrary to His state. In order that He might be the true Master He received the nature of a slave and served the slaves as far as the cross and death. Thus He obtained the souls of the slaves and gained direct control over their wills," and yokes this to the belief that God "does not command us as though we were slaves who owe Him a debt" but rather "summons us." God models for humans the degree of self-giving that is paradoxically empowering and yet functions as an invitation for others to similarly submit through iconic recognition. Cabasilas elaborates that God "displays His wisdom, His kindness, and his skill in order to inspire us to love Him," thus emphasizing the voluntary nature of submitting to God's power.[22] The hierarchy perpetuates the activity of self-giving not just as an aspect of power, but as the divine power evident in the incarnation. Simply put, kenotic self-giving is self-building in the image and likeness of God.[23]

With the theological starting point that all power belongs to God and this power is manifest through condescension in order to elevate others, Dionysius, Maximus, Stethatos, and Cabasilas configure hierarchy as the divinely given and uniquely structured means of mediating and participating in divine power. Dionysius the Areopagite, for example, speaking about the ecclesiastical hierarchy, claims that it was necessary for God to communicate the imperceptible through the perceptible—that is, to provide humans with a means of participating in this divine power.[24] Consequently, the hierarchy becomes a means of imitating and imaging divine power in this world in a way that Orthodox Christians believe communicates heaven on earth.[25] Dionysius describes hierarchy as uniquely suited to convey, perpetuate, and embody the paradoxical power of God. Although at the institutional level it may seem that hierarchy is a rather straightforward administration of power by those who have more power over those who have less, the theological starting points about power that the Byzantine authors share cast this oppressive read of hierarchy into question. With Dionysius, for example, the first in the hierarchy in biblical continuity must become last by perfecting every level of the hierarchy. The hierarchs are called to be the first servant of all through their perfection of the hierarchy.[26] The inversion of power expectations to be divinely imitative are necessary if one is to take seriously Ignatius's claim that the hierarch or the bishop stands liturgically and pastorally in the place of God.[27] To be a living icon of God for others requires for the Byzantine authors a visible offering of divine power (in a way that is self-effacing) to others.[28] Byzantine authors structure and restructure the hierarchy in such a way as to promote and protect this divine reflectivity and relational service in a way that elevates the whole ecclesial Body in divine likeness.

As a divinely given means of mediating power, the hierarchy manifests divine similitude in the living Body of Christ as unconfused order, unity, and diversity. Hierarchic ordering and diversity facilitates a mutuality of kenotic service between different members and levels of the hierarchy.[29] The liturgical realization of the Body of Christ as indicated by Maximus reflects this order and diversity in mutual service.[30] By dividing the church into ordained ranks with specific ministries and laity with diverse talents, Cabasilas likewise shows that the liturgy manifests relational self-giving in the realization of the Body of Christ.[31] On a ritual level the priest turns to the people and asks forgiveness, he submits to them as the image of the high priest and the people submit themselves to the priest to receive the

sacraments. The exchanges between the deacons and the priest, bishop and deacon, and so on reflect a bowing of reverence and acknowledgement of the submissive and humble posture in relation to one another through service.[32] Even in instances where one might say that the patriarch is in power, it is both an acknowledgement by the ecclesiastical community that this person is divinely empowered through communication and participation in divinity, and that the ecclesiastical community, recognizing the iconicity (through both office and person) of the patriarch, voluntarily submits in obedience to the patriarch, giving him power to act in the community's interest. The priest cedes power to the people to acknowledge his ministerial and pastoral divine likeness in order to receive continued fulfillment of his rank by serving the laity as a priest. Thus, the Byzantine authors' engagement with hierarchy can be read as a mode of mediating and producing power that is uniquely in the image and likeness of God. In order to perpetuate this iconicity, the hierarchy reinforces a structural system where God is manifest as the first and the last—both as the head of the Body of Christ and yet below, washing the feet of others, out of love.[33] By emphasizing a system of superiors and subordinates, a system of power flowing from the top down, and yet ceded and recognized from the bottom up, Byzantine authors such as Dionysius produce the spiritual life as a system of exchanges, relations, and interactions between ranks. It is through these seemingly inequitable power dynamics that one is further molded into the divine image with the paradoxical potential for totalizing equitable divine participation.[34]

Beyond the relationality of the ranks functioning within the liturgical and pastoral contexts, the sacramental rites themselves (as hierarchy) produce the human subject as paradoxically divinely powerful. Dionysius, Maximus, Stethatos, and Cabasilas reinforce the idea that power comes from God alone and those who receive this power through the sacraments are themselves made powerful as divine participants.[35] In order to receive the sacraments, however, one must construct oneself in a posture of humility and penitence. Ritually this takes various forms. For example, in baptism the initiate appears disrobed and is submerged by the hand of another; in Eucharist the communicant similarly depends on the offering of the priest and the community; and likewise in chrismation, the newly illumined receives power in a humble mode of acceptance.[36] The priest or hierarch is only powerful by being in contact with the divine power of the sacraments.[37] In as much as the hierarch controls access to the sacraments,

one could say that he then has power. Cabasilas, for example, does not limit divine power to the sacraments, but does emphasize that divine power is always present in the sacraments.[38] Although the priest may seem to be "in power," his verbal and visual recognition of God's glory and his own unworthiness serves to negate ownership over this power.[39] Visually and rhetorically this scripted negation lends him greater authority via christological imitation of humility and service. The laity depend on the priest, the priest on the laity, and both priest and laity on God for power to exist as divine participants. The sacramental rites construct the Christian self by adding layers of recognition, and calling into being, calling into action, and calling into divine communion.[40] The liturgy as the work of the people has and perpetuates its own power by constructing the Christian subject as a participant in divine power.[41] Hierarchy is the means by which this power flows and is situated among different communities as unitive. The ritual enactment of the liturgical symbols reinforces their realization as a realization of power, one that is believed to be produced and reproduced among Byzantine liturgical participants.

Within the liturgical context, especially in the Byzantine flourishing of liturgical adornment and elaboration, one might expect tension between the ornateness of the liturgical icon and the lowliness espoused as divinely reflective. Liturgical beauty and adornment, however, are not typically interpreted as sources of tension as much as they are a means of celebrating the paradox of the height of God's condescending love manifest in the incarnation. Along with the belief in a God who is omnipotent and completely self-giving and humble even unto death is a celebrated apophatic dialectic to try and communicate the ineffable.[42] Power is communicated as majesty, glory, wealth, dominion, sovereignty, and aligned with the imperial power radiating down through the ranks and ministries. Simultaneously, however, power is wholly other and a "folly" to this world, so that it is manifest through humility, obedience, voluntary subordination, and loving servitude. A rich tradition of liturgical texts suggest that Byzantine Christian practitioners should stand in wonder of the manifestation of divine power revealed in lowliness. With every liturgical "Lord have mercy" response, the congregation constructs itself as the humble subjects of divine power and acknowledges the power of God as foremost characterized by his giving of mercy.[43] The hymnographic tradition is rich with praises of the "paradoxical wonder" of God's condescension and juxtapositions of the greatness of God's divinity and power alongside suffering and humil-

ity.[44] This juxtaposition is not to draw contrast, but rather points toward the manifestation of a singular divine power offered on behalf of humanity. It is in the dual acknowledgement of God as sovereign and humble that God's power is known. Therefore, the sensory development of liturgy as heaven on earth can be read as consistent with the thearchical power presuppositions reflected in Byzantine theology. Both aspects of divine power manifest in the world are communicated by hierarchy, and perpetuated by its idealization and practical realization.

Beyond the liturgical functioning and realization of the Body of Christ, the Byzantine authors also emphasize hierarchy as a stratified corporeal organization unified by a singular divine power. Dionysius and Maximus especially emphasize order and harmony as befitting of the Body of Christ, opposed to confusion or disorder. These authors reject the divine likeness of disorder, anarchy, instability, and confusion. It is not that these things do not exist in the history of the Byzantine Church, but that they are not accepted as part of the divine reality to which the ecclesiastical participants are called and believed to participate. Disorder and confusion do not bring about the mutual participation and self-giving evinced by authentic hierarchical communion. By emphasizing the necessity of order, these authors emphasize what they see as essential to reflecting divine nature in trinitarian and christological terms.[45] In trinitarian imitation there is a shared power that remains one, and never ceases to be enacted through divine agency, but that is also christologically what gives life to creation and elevates the human to the divine realm.[46] Recognition of divine likeness leads to the ceding of authority, and subordination becomes voluntary and is based on divinely imitative humility.[47] In constructing a unified diversity of divine imitation, the Byzantine authors construct a reality in which rank and distinction are necessary for divine participation.

Divine power produces a hierarchical reality, which in turn reproduces this power via the hierarchical theological affirmation of divine reality. Divine power also produces liturgy—which is believed to be authentically communicative of divine truth—and produces subjects as divine participants. For the Byzantine authors and the tradition they reflect, power is not in institutions and it is not in persons except by participating in God and becoming God-like. Hierarchy thus produces Orthodox identity by facilitating this participation sacramentally and iconically, and by making possible the corporeal recognition of authentic divine likeness. According to Dionysius, God reveals hierarchy as the means of living in ever-greater

similitude and participation with God.[48] There is, however, also an impetus within the hierarchy toward forming of the Body into greater divine similitude of what it already is.[49] Acknowledging the human participants within the hierarchy and the varying degrees or divinization among them, the ecclesiastical Body of Christ is both already divine and ever in a state of becoming divine. This shaping of the ecclesiastical body is brought about through relational self-giving and mutual humble service, which is institutionalized ecclesiastically, theologically, and liturgically via the hierarchy.[50]

In addition to the overall stratified relational diverse mutuality and liturgical imaging, hierarchy mediates divine power through cultivation of divine likeness by fostering the paradoxically powerful virtues of humility and obedience. In cultivating obedience and humility, hierarchy is the primary means of producing the human subject as an authentic divine participant and icon in Byzantine Christianity.[51] Because it is simultaneously the means of control of the Body of Christ and the Body of Christ itself, the hierarchy creates the human person as a divine participant and icon. The structured and stratified relations and dictates of behavior within those relations mold the Christian subject into a humble, obedient, and therefore empowered in divine likeness, individual. Specifically, Byzantine theologians praise the virtue of humility in a way that is absolute, and reinforces hierarchy even in (or rather especially in) instances where it is seemingly self-effacing, negating, and abasing. Stethatos makes the connection between power and humility explicit, stating "The operative power behind this blessed life is humility."[52] The power of humility, in terms of discourse, is not insignificant as a mode of invoking rhetorical tropes of self-deprecation to assert authority. As Stethatos's own depiction of the New Theologian suggests, the public performance of humility as a means of asserting authority should be perceived as impotent if divorced from an experience of encountering divine humility.[53] Cabasilas offers similar reassurance against the empty invocation of humble discourse to achieve worldly ends in suggesting that the sacramental participants as the Body of Christ are able to recognize authentic divine likeness.[54] The paradox of intentionally adopting humble verbal and physical postures as a means of exercising authority over others appeals to those who want their leaders to reflect the christological archetype of having "all authority in heaven and on earth."[55] Hierarchy reinforces the communication of legitimate power and authority via iconic manifestation and recognition, and contains within

itself correctives for instances where heavenly and earthly hierarchic realities diverge. Christian theology teaches that in order to reveal the true self in the image of Christ, the individual must be realized within his or her God-given end.[56] The key here is that this image of Christ is not some radiance and powerful identity apart from the extreme humility manifest in the incarnation.

The more one is obedient and gives up power to others, the more one is divinely empowered. Each member of the hierarchy is supposed to be in obedience to the one above. The highest hierarchs therefore stand in obedience to God, and in His image are obedient to the needs of the lowest stratum of the hierarchy. Moreover, according to Dionysius, even the hierarchs are to be submissive to the collective will of the other hierarchs.[57] Consequently, Byzantine authors configure voluntary self-abasement as a manifestation of divine power and glory. Dionysius, for example, explains that the monks are the "most exalted order" of the initiates because, due to the "purity of their duty and service to God," they are exalted in their voluntary service.[58] Similarly, Cabasilas explains that the saints have "power of intercession" with God and now have "power to absolve others from their faults," which again displays power in terms of aiding others. To this Cabasilas adds that "nothing is more delightful and pleasing to them [the saints] than that we should give thanks and praise to God because of them."[59] The saints have power because they do not seek their own recognition or power (even in their holiness) except that others glorify God in them.

Thearchical Power Theory in Practice

If all power originates and proceeds from God alone, then all power, to the extent that any power is actual power as opposed to a human illusion of power, is divine. Any authentic human power is only a participation in divine power, and, for the Orthodox Christian, only authentically recognizable power is authoritative. Those who employ their positions in pursuit of their own aggrandizement do not function hierarchically. Consequently, those who have ambitions short of correctly oriented divine imitation have limited authority.[60] One can call to mind many seemingly socially powerful individuals who are characterized by evil, but in Byzantine theological terms these individuals did not actually have power, because the only true power is power through participation in God. In short, the Byzantine

authors assert that that legitimate power and therefore authority reflects God. This makes certain types of discourse possible (those that reinforce the divine power location) and obscures others that locate power and authority with some human location or production.

If the legitimate authority must reflect God, then it is essential to be able to articulate what this reflection looks like. For the Byzantines, this reflection is precisely in the communication of divinity to others.[61] Power of God is that which manifests power by giving it away to others. This occurs without God ceasing to be powerful, but rather in producing more authentic power through self-giving. Maximus explains that Christ "through his love towards us, emptied himself, taking the form of a slave . . . and through us he became wholly man to such a degree that unbelievers thought that he was not God."[62] God is glorious in giving up himself on behalf of others, and this is the archetypical model of power in Orthodoxy. Each of the four Byzantine authors I have presented suggests that his readers can identify and recognize legitimate power and authority by its communication of divinity. In so doing, all of them are theologizing about what God looks like and who God is in a way that is different in emphasis but consistent in condescension. Maximus, for example, lauds the addressees of his *Commentary on the Our Father* as being "in imitation of God" and links this with his "admiring the greatness of your condescension."[63] Cabasilas's claim is that the power of the priest or hierarch can only be exercised through persuasion, not compulsion, and that this persuasiveness is based on being Christ-like.[64] Indeed, power *is* when it is enacted through self-effacing (which is simultaneously self-realizing) love because the power of salvation occurs similarly through an outpouring and kenotic offering of love.[65] The emphasis on divine humility as a paradoxical manifestation of power gives content to what the authentic divine likeness communicated by hierarchy looks like. Any power ascribed to the hierarchy that does not display humility and self-giving is an illusion, not authentic hierarchy.

All the authors agree that any authority that does not communicate God by doing what he or she is supposed to do on behalf of others is not legitimate. Even more profoundly, this individual does not have any power associated with his or her person (although in the case of ordination the power is still affiliated with the office).[66] This is in and of itself a manifestation of the power of the authors. These four Byzantine authors indicate that, by shifting the power onto God, any misbehaving cleric or member of the hierarchy who is not fulfilling his or her function cannot actually block

another's access to divine power. That is, an immoral priest still may have divine power in his enactment of the sacraments, but lack authority beyond the liturgical scripting. This rhetorical and political move reflects an inscription of a new power that is liberating and binding at the same time. If, for example, a sinful priest offers the sacrament as Cabasilas suggests, the sacramental power is not impaired because it is offered by the people and affected by God.[67] By naming and constructing hierarchy as such, any circumstance in which one cannot access divine power is not legitimate hierarchy. Maximus takes this to its obvious conclusion when he rejects the authority of the hierarchy of Constantinople, and instead aligns himself with Rome based on the belief that Rome can sacramentally communicate divine power by having the correct confession of faith.[68] According to our Byzantine theologians, one does not need to have a socially conceived position of power to have access to God's power, and God's power is the only true power. By relocating power with God alone, the Byzantine authors assert that only those who participate in God authentically have power. All others, and all power that does not reflect God, is not authoritative, and even more fundamentally, is not actually power.[69]

Orthodox conceptions and productions of power in light of conclusions mentioned above reveal a fundamental assumption about power that allows greater flexibility in how Orthodox Christians maneuver and construct hierarchy practically and theologically. By locating God as the only true source of power and the one through whom power is, Byzantine authors remove all humans who do not participate in this power from any power ideologically. What this means in terms of authority is significant—those in power who lack divine likeness are viewed as not actually having power rather than just lacking in the right to use it (authority). The potential for the hierarchy to communicate demonic or merely human power exists, but in a way where power is interpreted along the lines of force or violence as distinct from power. There is no possibility of one in a high position of authority doing more harm than good, because the moment that individual is no longer divinely reflective he is spiritually divested of his authority, and devoid of any true power. Moreover, for the Byzantine theologians there is not a circumstance wherein there would be an adversarial relationship between those with power and those without power. If the bishop, for example, was able to persuade and lead a community into heresy, according to some modern readers, this would be "power" as long as the community produced the possibility of his leadership and accepted

it through a response of yielding or the inability to imagine an alternative. According to the Byzantine authors, however, this bishop would be acting without divine power because he would be acting unhierarchically. Authors such as Cabasilas trust that the church as the Body of Christ would recognize this lack of divine power and reject or rebuke the ministrant.[70] This way of singularly locating power and imaging power in the world as divinely reflective undermines any personal augmentation an individual might gain or exercise based on his or her own ambitions not realized through divine iconicity.

Hierarchy is a model in which obedience is the foundation of the system of administration.[71] Without obedience, the hierarchy manifests chaotic self-interested persons iconoclastic to the divine image. If there is obedience, then there is the divine presence. That means there can be hierarchy and its unified divinely reflective body. Even if the superiors are acting very little as if they in fact had more divine "power" or similitude, the hierarchy still functions in a sanctifying way because of the presence of subordinates' obedience.[72] Similarly, the hierarchical system fosters obedience so that even if the subordinate errs at the direction of the superior, at least the virtue of obedience is retained. In these circumstances, the sin of the directed action falls upon the superior not the one acting under obedience. In this way, the one under obedience, while ostensibly appearing limited, has freedom in a divinely imitative way (compare this with the will in Maximus the Confessor)—that is, freedom to act in accordance with the divine will via obedience.[73] The very fearful hierarchical absolutism of obedience that appears to remove all personal power, and that is quite threatening to modern sensibilities, is unabashed in Byzantine spirituality. Obedience to the divine will and subsequently the established divine hierarchical order through total submission to a spiritual leader facilitates the manifestation of true power. In the relinquishing of personal autonomy, however, it should be kept in mind that one ultimately submits oneself to the heavenly hierarch and the authentic hierarchy, so that the subordinate does not necessarily need to follow the earthly hierarch blindly. Stethatos relays Symeon the New Theologian's instructions regarding obedience to one's spiritual father that

> in all those matters in which there is no deviation from God's commandment or from the apostolic canons and regulations, you must absolutely obey him in them all and trust in him as you would in

> the Lord. But in those matters in which the Gospel of Christ and the laws of His church are jeopardized, you must not only not follow the orders of the person who suggests this to you or orders it, but must not do so even if an angel has come down from heaven and is preaching something to you contrary to what those who were eyewitnesses to the Word have preached.[74]

For Symeon (typically read as one of the most hierarchically liberal of the Byzantine tradition), one has authority to subvert human hierarchy to remain faithful to divine hierarchy. In contrast, Dionysius's rebuke of the monk Demophilus appears to support an opposing view—that one cannot subvert human hierarchy without jeopardizing one's own participation in the divine hierarchy.[75] Although these claims differ, they reflect a common assumption of prioritizing power with divinity. For Symeon, ultimate authority belongs to God. Therefore, obedience is first and foremost due to God and disobedience toward a spiritual father is permitted if it conflicts with divine knowledge. In contrast, for Dionysius, God is the ultimate authority so therefore any human misuse of the earthly hierarchy cannot jeopardize one faithfully participating in the hierarchy's obedience to this hierarchy (basically the hierarchic flow of authority from God). Despite the distinctions between these two authors, by relocating all power with God the Byzantine authors reconfigure human power "problems" as either irrelevant to or the very means of accessing divine power. There cannot be a point where someone is unable to access divine power because of a human power mediator's failings or abuses, because that faulted person lacks any real power of his or her own.

Humility and comparable virtues of subordination are promoted hierarchically by encouraging obedience from subordinates to superiors, and by viewing the fulfillment of one's own position (no matter how low) as sufficient for salvation. Moreover, an attitude of humility is valorized in not striving for visibly and humanly acknowledged higher ranks. Byzantine hagiographical and monastic texts support the spiritual value that one should not only do what a superior says, but to do it with the humble awareness that even more should be enjoined upon oneself. This approach is interpreted as a means of cultivating a divinely reflective attitude of humility.[76] Maximus likewise asserts that everything save oneself appears good to the humble because expectations of personal justice and prominence in this life are rejected.[77] In so "making do," the individual is through an

inverted perspective empowered through being Christ-like in humility, and therefore powerful through self-emptying. Cabasilas similarly explains that Christ in the incarnation "envisioned this self-emptying and carried it out, and made the instrument [i.e., Christ's human nature] by which He might be able to endure terrible things and to suffer pain" and that it is by enduring pain that Christ proved "He indeed loves exceedingly."[78] Cabasilas's explanation identifies a willingness to suffer with the manifestation of love, a concept that in human application has the possibility of perpetuating destructive and unhealthy personal relationships. These characteristics can be used to reinforce the status quo even when it is personally detrimental or manifesting abusive dynamics, all with the assertion that divine power will not be overcome, and in the next life will "vindicate us against our enemies."[79]

The potential challenges to the above line of thinking are numerous; however, one clarification must be made before moving elsewhere in the discussion of the implications of the Byzantine conceptions of inverted power expectations. Subjugation that is not voluntarily adopted or accepted and offered up sacrificially should not be valorized as divinely reflective. A humble attitude and even the voluntary acceptance of an imposed subordinate position can indeed be evidence of divine power. Maximus praises the voluntary nature of Christ's own subjection and his followers "who freely accept subjection." Maximus explains that there is great power in this posture of voluntary subjection for "through it the last enemy death, will be destroyed."[80] Orthodox authors do not view this self-effacement as an annihilation of the self, but a refining and revelation of the self as created by God to be in the image and likeness of God. It is, as Maximus would perhaps articulate it, the realization of one's λόγος in the divine λόγος[81] The subjection to God is, in Maximus's terminology, "a willing surrender, so that the one from whom we have received being we long to receive being moved as well. It is like the relationship between an image and its archetype."[82] The "exercise of free choice" is necessary for humans "to be revealed as son of God."[83] Humans have free will to determine their acceptance and participation in divine power. God's power functions through invitation and persuasion, not force imposed upon someone.[84] Stethatos explains that "the dignity of the intellect lies in its intelligence, its royal and sovereign nature, and its power of self-determination."[85] The self-determination is also an aspect of this powerful divine reflectivity. Consequently, when there is no choice in ecclesial position or circumstance,

there is a choice for empowerment in one's attitude.[86] The voluntary adoption of a subordinate posture is lauded by the church as evidence of the virtue of humility. This is not to say that those in positions of abuse, poverty, etc. are not supposed to seek a means of bettering or escaping their situation (as they should not be a means of facilitating others' sins or failing to recognize the honor due the image of God present within them). Oppressed and abused individuals are completely justified in seeking different circumstances because their present circumstances were not voluntarily assumed. Simultaneously, however, those suffering in such positions without earthly recourse to justice can recognize their divine similitude even amidst their suffering by themselves becoming divinely imitative in sacrificial suffering.[87] There are numerous instances within the hagiographical tradition of the Byzantine Church in which those who elect not to take the "out" of the hierarchy by rejecting the authority of one above her, and instead adopting an extreme posture of humility, are lauded for this Christ-likeness.[88] God through his outpouring of love and condescension to humanity is poor and suffering. Maximus explains that

> if the poor man is God, it is because of God's condescension in becoming poor for us and in taking upon himself by his own suffering the sufferings of each one and "until the end of time" always suffering mystically out of goodness in proportion to each one's suffering. All the more reason, then, will that one be God who by loving men in imitation of God heals by himself in divine fashion the hurts of those who suffer and who shows that he has in his disposition, safeguarding all proportion, the same power of saving Providence that God has.[89]

For humans to be free and sovereign, and participate in God's divinity, they need a true option not to do so.[90] It is important to note the limitations of this theological approach to reframing power and authority. Although domination, violence, and abuse are not "power" according to the Byzantine authors, just recognizing that these forms of force are not "power" does not prohibit someone from acting upon another forcefully.

The theological theorization and appropriation of the ideal of hierarchy written by Byzantine authors are not somehow outside of the hierarchic structure and power productions of their own historical and ideological contexts. They are wholly within and products of a hierarchical social and spiritual reality that is reinforced and produced anew at each liturgy

and Orthodox interaction. This is evident by the amount of attention each author gives the liturgical context in interpreting movement and activity, and ritual words. Even in their acts of writing, these authors can be viewed as constructing (consciously or not) an ecclesial social and internal spiritual reality that is ever-increasingly believed to be in the image of God. When these authors relocate power to God, it creates a textual realm of power for the author who may be otherwise ecclesiastically disenfranchised. For Dionysius, this may be one reason he adopted a pseudonym—he was not able to say or speak freely, or at least with authority, under his own name; by writing as the Areopagite he produces power and is posthumously acknowledged (at least by some) with authoritative writings.[91] Maximus likewise was persecuted for his outspoken christological beliefs, and his teachings display an alterity to the identity that was oppressed in locating power with God, with the truth Maximus claims to defend.[92] Stethatos likewise faced adversity in commemoration of his charismatic teacher Symeon the New Theologian and although his writings are by and large accepted, he may have used his writings as a mean of exerting power through the production of ideas.[93] Lastly, Cabasilas produces himself as a theologian through his writing, which reflects a response to controversy and a historical period of ecclesiastical strains. In this sense each of the authors is performing a hierarchic identity while to varying degrees rejecting the earthly ecclesiastical hierarchy of the day. Each author within his writing in some way distances himself from claiming authority for himself, by writing not on his own behalf but pointing to what is framed as eternal truth. Derek Krueger's claim that this style of humble authorship in itself is a type of power play is consistent with the trend we find in the practice of hierarchy.[94] The Byzantine authors shift the constructed view of reality by constructing a new reality and hiding its constructed-ness by asserting it as eternal truth. This mystification of hierarchy also provides that individuals are limited in their judgment during their lifetimes about what constitutes the divinely communicative church as a whole. Stethatos explains this limitation, saying: "Sometimes we hear someone speaking to all corners in an outwardly obsequious and humble manner, while inwardly he pursues the praise of men and is filled with self-conceit, guile, malice, and rancor. And there are times when we see someone fighting for righteousness outwardly with lofty words of wisdom, taking a stand against falsehood or the transgression of God's laws, and looking only to the truth, while within he is all modesty, humility, and love for his fellow-men."[95]

Contemporary implications of this type of engagement and theorization are not limited to issues of clerical abuse and gender concerns. Conceiving of power as not over, but as a generative relation, should then promote a more positive (if not apophatic) approach to hierarchy and ecclesiastical participation and administration in general.

Shaping Modern Power Interpretations via Thearchical Power

The thearchical interpretation of power and hierarchic validity suggested by Dionysius, Maximus, Stethatos, and Cabasilas offers several opportunities for shaping present-day approaches to analyzing power, particularly as it intersects religion. Although the immediate relevance of the Byzantine theological approach to the issues of power and authority are logically tied to the Orthodox Church past and present, the potential impact of a thearchical power theorization is not denominationally limited. Envisioning parallel or broader appropriations of some of the priorities of thearchical power in other religious and secular contexts poses several challenging questions to the ways power is often interpreted in modernity.

First, although modern interpretations of power modeled in the writings of Marx, Foucault, Butler, and even Arendt take issue with the identification of power with a singular dominant agent, the Byzantines construct a singularly powerful agent in a hybrid way that warrants careful analysis. According to the Byzantine construction, power is diffused through the ecclesiastical community and hierarchical system, and yet there remains a singular originating and pure source of power. Although most modern theorists would reject any claim to theism or a singular power source, the Byzantines offer a model of multidirectional power dynamics that relies on relational exchanges to be produced socially. This presents a cooperative model of power production, what Orthodox refer to as synergy, where human participants freely work with God to realize an already-existent divine power, and through relationship realize their own divinely called personhood.[96] One challenge this Byzantine hybrid approach to conceiving power poses for modern theorists is entertaining the possibility of instances where power could indeed function along a "both and" model of administration—where power is produced "over" a community through service to the community, and flows up from a communal production of power through voluntary submission. Certainly, some theorists would reject this type of model and name the "top down" exercise of power something

else; however, even in this instance if it is not power, it would be fruitful to consider what this "top down" flow is and in what way it might be distinct from what is named power. At the very least, the Byzantine hybrid model of power dynamics should be kept in mind for analyzing additional historical or ideological contexts in which comparable dynamics might appear. Moreover, the unique attributes of the techniques and subjects produced by those who believe to function within such a system of power need to be assessed.

Secondly, the Byzantine thearchical interpretation of power provides a challenge to secular scholars and historians to take seriously all actors in a given social-power system, including what external analysts may perceive to be invisible or imaginary agents. Foucault keenly observes that "power relations are rooted in the system of social networks," and the Byzantine authors likely would concur with this statement, while they probably also would make the clarification that this network includes God. Even atheistic theorists can acknowledge the potent force of belief in shaping subjects and producing distinct forms of power. Therefore, it is necessary for scholars to empathically analyze social networks in terms of how various communities determine them for themselves, inclusive of nonmaterial agents.[97] Moreover, the Byzantine system suggests a universality that is missing from the analysis of such theorists as Foucault. Foucault specifically rejects a "theory of power" because he claims that all power is context dependent and therefore all that can be offered is an "analytics of power" for any given situation.[98] The Byzantine theorization of power challenges this view by suggesting that there is continuity between all power (God) and that this power is already "everywhere present and filling all things."[99] Even though there is much in this latter statement that no doubt Foucault would reject, the challenge remains to consider how communities' perception of themselves as participating in an eternal and universal power marks their social production and negotiation of power in distinct ways.

In conjunction with the particularities of power as conceived of as both singularly sourced and a socially diffused product, in Orthodox theology power *is* because it is identified with the God who *Is*. Contrastingly, for most modern theorists, power is not properly a "thing" but rather a product of social relations. Both moderns and Byzantines would likely agree, however, that power is experienced and generated in relationship.[100] This relational and personally sourced conception of power espoused by the Byzantines, however, should challenge modern theorists to consider the

consequences of conceiving power in more personalized or at least less abstract terms. For most contemporary theorists, power is typically regarded as a type of social production without any type of normative attributes. Arendt's distinction between violence and power appears to have the most positive-laden assessment of power, yet even her interpretation of the concept is divorced from associating power with moral values.[101] As I have argued, however, the Byzantine approach to power as relational is very much grounded in manifesting and recognizing altruistic attributes as determined by a personal God. Byzantine and Orthodox communities, however, are not unique in historically and presently identifying power and authority in terms of ethical outcomes and a personal yet absolute divine agent. The challenge for scholars of religion therefore is to assess how moral values and beliefs about a perfect divine source of all power shapes the religious community's social production of power and subjectivity. In the Orthodox theological context, I have argued that humble self-giving and kenotic service toward others are markers of legitimate authority and "true" power. These "divine" attributes are subsequently reflected in discourse and praxis throughout various domains of the tradition. The opposite is also evident, that the Byzantine authors maintained the ideological refusal of granting a person authority and naming something as power based on the lack of certain divinely reflective attributes. This is in itself a "technique" of power that warrants broader analysis and comparison to negotiating power in other religious and secular communities. Within other religious contexts, however, different values aside from the selfless love (as witnessed in Byzantine Christianity) may be at play in relation to power, and other ways of relating divine agents and sources of power may be more integral in determining what an "analytics of power" might look like in that specific context. How distinctive practices, modes of being, and identities emerge within particular communities in relation to certain values and justifying the sources of these values are areas ripe for further exploration.

In addition to accounting for the personal and positive nature of power in Orthodox Christian contexts and investigating how similar characteristics might exist and function in other religious communities, it is also important to consider how theological power formulations are translated to or from secular contexts. Both Butler and Foucault suggest that translating a theological prioritization and interpretation of power into a secular sphere involves some degree of changing the type of power itself. When trying to translate a religious concept to a secular application, Butler

cautions that the religious concept as a matrix of subject formation (as it certainly is in the Byzantine cases) may not carry the same effect in a secular context, and that theology cannot always fully be extracted from a given concept in order for it to have comparable secular significance.[102] Consequently, reflecting on appropriations of and similarities to thearchical power in secular contexts prompts two questions. First, how do religious values provide unique matrices of subject formation that might be rendered less potent in a secular context? Second, can an analytics of power that appeals to an altruistic identification of power ever be relevantly translated to a secular, more relative sphere? Foucault's discussion of pastoral power suggests that religious techniques and modes of power production and administration are replicated and appropriated in secular settings in a way that is quite pervasive and effective. The task remains, however, to identify the characteristics of the religious mode of power that are lost in this translation and how they are justified as dispensable.[103] In Foucault's description of pastoral power's appropriation in other nonreligious fields such as medicine, he suggests that certain values are maintained in this religious-to-secular transition that are quite potent without sufficiently accounting for the relinquishing of values that made pastoral power so effective in the religious context. The question needs to be asked then of power in secular contexts: What types of religious values are still at work in these contexts, and how do these forms of power relate to their religious origins? Addressing these questions will not only draw more nuanced attention to religion as a potent force in the world, but also prompt more complex analyses of power inclusive of multiple social identities (secular and religious) and the ways they interact and overlap.

Alongside questions of how religious (in this case thearchical) interpretations of power translate to a secular context, there also remains an issue of power being interpreted by Byzantines (and presumably numerous other religiously based societies) as existing in some way independent from and simultaneously united to the subjects that produce and are produced by it. For Butler, analysis of performativity has the potential to expose hegemonic fictions that produce subjects in particular and recognizable ways.[104] In the case of Orthodox practice, however, the participants' subjectivity is precisely built on rejecting the claim that their beliefs are "fiction." The Orthodox subject is unable to get outside of him/herself to reject such a hegemony as fictive or arbitrary, when this enactment of power is constitutive of his or her identity and regarded in terms of absolute truth. What

is necessary, however, is to question, through a more modern analysis of power—both with a Butler-style focus on performativity and a Foucauldian emphasis on unearthing "techniques" of power—the parsing of religious identities in terms of distinguishing "fictive" elements as social-cultural productions that can be changed, and more fixed values that are regarded by the participant in terms of immovable Truth. Such an analysis will both aid the analyst in more precisely grasping the layers of identities that are both internally and externally imposed and those perceived by practitioners as subject to change.[105] Lastly, the challenge of the inability of participants determined by a given power system to recognize it as a fictive construct, as suggested above, is in some ways suggestive of Foucault's notion that power is only tolerable if it is "masked."[106] The Byzantine, especially Dionysian, celebratory framing of power as something divinely revealed and flowing throughout humanity, however, appears to challenge such an assertion. If scholars wish to maintain the interpretive assertion that power is socially masked, then a whole category of analysis of the paradoxical overtly revealed "masks" of power should be established and scrutinized for their unique features.

In summary, reading power as not "over" subordinates, but rather in the interior building of others and becoming one's true self through self-giving, reveals a theological conception of power that has real-world relevance for critically evaluating how people conceive of and cede authority, power, and legitimacy. Power is not a "thing" but a relationship created in the dynamic of relating one to another in a self-outpouring way that unifies through accessing divine power and increasing divine likeness. God is powerful ontologically, but in relation to individuals God only exerts or enacts this power to the extent that a person yields to God in his or her life. Additionally, on the human side, this framing of divine power results in a cultivation of virtues, rejection of self-will though not rejection of individuality (just individuality that is not realized in divine likeness), priority of unity through individuality, and ascetic training. Hierarchy is one aspect through which ideals, constructions, and productions of Byzantine power can be examined and evaluated. Hierarchy as both the sacred originating source and the organizational structure of the Body of Christ reveals power at every turn and in every stratified relational activity. Hierarchy is central in producing the Christian as a "self" who can be recognized in the divine image and has the knowledge and authority to recognize others in this image. Power in Byzantine theological conception

is a paradox of empowerment through dispossession of the illusion of self-power in exchange for divine power (which is eternally self-giving). Power is a paradox, and in earthly terms an illusion. The social construct of power produced in the Byzantine conception is constantly being transformed via the hierarchy to be produced in a way that participates in and receives divine power and ever-increasing likeness as the Body of Christ.

Power, as reflected in the hierarchy, is complex in its manifestation of strength and freedom that is confounding to human conceptions of power, and simultaneously recognizable by it. Because power is conceived of in this way, hierarchy becomes the means of accessing and resolving the paradox of attaining and administering power in a way that further shapes one in and communicates to the world divine likeness. Regardless of the historically and socially imbedded factors subtly shaping the hierarchical model of ecclesiastical administration as *the* model of church organization, Byzantines did interact with hierarchy as a religious ideal in such a way as to produce and perpetuate it as the source of accessing divine power within the ecclesiastical community.[107] The hierarchical discontinuities between ideology and practice are paradoxically complicated and ameliorated when hierarchy is constructed as the only means of mediating divine power.[108] Ultimately, Byzantine hierarchy mediates, produces, and ascribes power to its participants in a way that is believed to be uniquely communicative of, and conducive to, divine similitude. Byzantine Christian theorization, maintenance, and justification of hierarchy is constructed and reinforced by Dionysius, Maximus, Stethatos, and Cabasilas as that which is suited to mediate the paradox of God's infinite power in the finite world.[109] Hierarchy as a system of power does not rely on coercion or force, but instead functions internally among its members through values and attributes indicative of divine reflectivity to form them in the image of Christ. Theorizing power thearchically prompts a rethinking of discussions of ecclesiastical administration historically and ecclesiastical dispersal and centralization contemporarily. It also challenges modern analytics of power to take seriously the potencies and particularities of religious beliefs, identities, and practices in diverse contexts.

Conclusion

Ecclesiastical hierarchy is more than an arbitrary order of social administration. It is a theological concept most fruitfully and consistently read in the Byzantine tradition as the signifier for the communication of divinity and only source of authentic power. Even when the term is not explicitly invoked, several prominent Byzantine authors (such as Maximus the Confessor) reflect this divinely communicative definition of ecclesiastical hierarchy and a thearchically oriented interpretation of power in their determination of the authentic Body of Christ. Although the four Byzantine authors presented in this book span different historical contexts and address diverse concerns, several consistent themes emerge around a shared theological conception of authentic hierarchy as divinizing and divinely communicative activity. First, legitimate spiritual authority is determined by divine likeness and the ability to communicate divinity either personally and charismatically, or sacramentally through liturgical rites manifesting the correct confession of faith and christological image. Secondly, sinfulness by one rank of the hierarchy or priestly orders does not negate the possibility of divine communication for the other ranks and participants through the hierarchy because Christ is the ultimate source, activity, and end of the hierarchy. Thirdly, the ecclesiastical hierarchy is known and perfected in Christ, so that what the Orthodox name as hierarchy in this life is always limited by the ability to recognize and discern the divine image among humanity. All of these insights are dependent upon and reveal two fundamental assumptions—that any and all authentic human "power" is participative in the singularly sourced divine power, and that human

authority is dependent on divinely imitative kenotic relationships with others.

The theological content behind ecclesiastical hierarchy includes concepts of order as divinely reflective, stratified ecclesial ranks as the means of divine communication, and the tests of legitimate spiritual authority being activity that communicates divinity. These hierarchical associations permeate the Byzantine theological tradition and extend subtly into present Orthodox Christianity. Although the term "hierarchy" has become more pervasive and secular over time, the underlying conception of power by which Byzantines justify the category of hierarchy suffers limited development and inconsistent application in contemporary Orthodox practice. While the theology of thearchic and iconic power grounding hierarchy remains consistent among the Orthodox Church's recognition of holiness, humanly oriented aims and ambitions frequently obscure the necessary relationship between hierarchy (or even more specifically hierarchs) and holiness for realizing the ecclesiastical community as the living Body of Christ. Where ecclesiastical hierarch or hierarchy appears to lack divine likeness and communication of divine power, the authority of that individual or community lacks authenticity.

Orthodox Tradition?

The extent to which the theological trajectory I have developed in these chapters is representative of a timeless Orthodox Christian tradition remains open for evaluation. If one looks for this theological tradition, named by Dionysius the Areopagite as "ecclesiastical hierarchy," before Dionysius—despite the methodological problems this approach may incur—there are several themes of continuity.

To begin, the notion of the ordained ministers as divine manifestation is not new in the sixth century with Dionysius. There is a trend, particularly in the apostolic writings and church orders of Late Antiquity, to identify various clerical ranks with heavenly archetypes. The church orders suggest that the bishop should be approached and treated as God, while similarly assigning other ministries to christological, angelic, and pneumatological parallels and aspects of divine reflectivity. While the other associations vary from text to text, the identification of the bishop with God is consistent if any divine association is made at all. In this way, the later Dionysian formulation of determining ecclesiastical hierarchy by divine re-

flectivity, especially in a liturgical context, can be found in the earlier theological tradition as well.[1]

In addition to explicitly naming the liturgical ministers as divinely communicative, there are also textual traditions wherein ordination confers authority to fulfill a specific function in the church, thus linking one's ecclesial office with fulfillment of divinizing activity.[2] For example, the *Didache* determines the bishop's authenticity by evaluating the bishop's fulfillment of his teaching function—basically the communication of divinity didactically.[3] This activity is divinizing precisely because it is proper to the specific rank and the liturgical descriptions and contemplations ritually in a way that ensures the divine efficacy of the office or rank. Additionally, several instances within apostolic texts emphasize the church as the Body of Christ with particular ministers functioning in parallel to particular divine persons.[4] Ignatius of Antioch's famous quote comes within this tradition that "wherever the bishop shall appear, there let the multitude [of the people] also be; even as, wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church."[5] Ecclesiologically, the church depends on the existence of the bishop and his presence at the celebration of Eucharist. The pre-Nicene textual tradition supports the construction of the church as being hierarchically dependent in the sense that it is a divinely reflective stratified structure of priestly offices that determines the authenticity and boundaries of the church. The biblical justifications for and descriptions of the office as well as the characterization of Christ as the true high priest are also certainly relevant background for the theological tradition, and part of the justification given for the later hierarchical interpretation and negotiation.[6] The necessity of a priestly class of ministers and leaders associated with ritual and social-ecclesiological authority is obviously not new with the sixth century, and neither is its basic interpretation that is more robustly developed by Dionysius and later Byzantine authors.[7]

Church order, or more specifically even the orderly spatial arrangement of the ecclesial gathering, is also upheld as an ideal of divine imitation and reflectivity early on in Christian tradition.[8] The authorial subjects of this book do not focus heavily on the spatial arrangement of the church, with the most attention being given in a more contemplative style by Maximus. All four, however, do focus on the arrangement and actions done in the liturgical context as divinely reflective. Maximus particularly shares an affinity with this earlier tradition, in his consideration of the division of space and interior arrangement of the church as theologically significant

and therefore reflective of divine reality and divinely communicative. Displaying the influence of Neoplatonic philosophical values, in Byzantine conception, order is preferable to chaos, and has a divine origin.[9] The trinitarian debates and formulations of the fourth century forced the expansion of this notion so that order and equality in the Trinity were no longer conceived as mutually exclusive but rather perfectly united. This understanding of the Trinity as simultaneously ordered and equal makes room for taking ecclesial order among humanity as a reflection of divine unity. Each of the Byzantine authors in this book was well-trained in classical philosophy and the Christian appropriation of it preceding his own time. The emphasis on ecclesiastical order and activity is not new in the later Byzantine tradition, but it does take on a specifically Christian form in its christological and trinitarian emphases. For example, in Neoplatonism the concept of a Triad or Trinity and preference for order over chaos clearly predominates, but in the writings of Maximus and Cabasilas stemming from Dionysian appropriation, this emphasis on order as divinely reflective takes on specifically christological importance.[10] Dionysius likewise attends to the triune nature of God by drawing heavily on the Neoplatonic tradition, so that hierarchy becomes the means of divine reflectivity in both trinitarian and the christological senses. The tradition of stratified orderly ranks as divinely reflective of true equality and unity in divinely given diversity and particularity exists in the Byzantine tradition before Dionysius, and continues well beyond Cabasilas in the writings of modern Orthodox ecclesiological writers.[11]

The last thematic category relevant for considering the theological construction of hierarchy presented as continuous with an earlier theological tradition is that of spiritual authority being determined by its divine communicability. All four of the authors presented herein make various points (and to various degrees) to emphasize that an individual's authenticity as having some legitimate spiritual authority lies in his or her ability to truthfully and recognizably communicate divinity in the position of lived activity in which they are divinely called. There might be instances where a person possesses multiple facets of identity and he or she may be authoritative in some, but not in others, depending on how God is communicated, manifest, and recognized in each of these domains. The validity of one's life and vocation is determined by it being recognizably communicative of, and reflective of, divinity. Hence, a priest may be able to be spiritually authoritative in the liturgical context, wherein he actually communes in-

dividuals to the Body of Christ, but he may be less authoritative as perhaps a spiritual confessor if he has not yet acquired divine experience in his own spiritual life. Examples of this test and limit of spiritual authority from the earlier Byzantine tradition exist primarily in the genre of canon law.[12] Likewise, priestly spiritual authority in the ritual context as being divinely authenticated in the rite and its words and actions (such as we see emphasized by Cabasilas) is similarly indicated in the early church orders and later Byzantine ordination and sacramental rites.[13] In the pastoral domain or public positions of authority, the character of the leader is more relevant to recognition, scrutiny, and divine reflectivity. Well before Stethatos, nonordained individuals in many diverse vocations were recognized as having spiritual authority superior to ordained clerics and those who did have spiritual authority via ordination were limited in authority outside of the ministry to which they were ordained. This is manifest in the hagiographical and ascetic genres preceding and contemporary with the authors presented.[14]

Beyond Byzantium historically, there are additional thematic continuities with the thearchical and hierarchical theology offered by Dionysius and his appropriators. The Orthodox tradition of spiritual eldership, for example, embodied in the Philokalic tradition and adapted even into the present provides space for considering the continued relationship between piety and authority, as well as the hierarchy of male and female spiritual mentorship that is often distinct from the episcopal and patriarchal offices. Within the ordained hierarchic offices, there are contemporary resonances and developments with the theological trajectories outlined in this book that warrant further exploration. The modern Orthodox saint, Silouan the Athonite (1866–1938), for example, echoes the relationship between priest and power that we have seen in the Byzantine conception of hierarchy as mediation and production of divine power. Silouan explains that

> the Lord calls upon bishops to lead their flocks and bestows upon them the grace of the Holy Spirit. In the Holy Spirit they have the authority to release sin or not. They are the heirs of the Apostles, and they lead us to Christ by the grace bestowed upon them. They teach us repentance; they teach us to keep the commandments of the Lord. They enlighten us with the word of God, so that we might experience the Lord. They show us the path of salvation and help us rise to the peak of the humble spirit of Christ.[15]

Silouan's description of the priest's power residing in the Holy Spirit, proceeding hierarchically through the apostles, realized in communicating divinity to others, and embodying the paradoxical ascent to voluntary condescending humility as salvific divine imitation and participation is just one example of the hierarchical insights reflected throughout Byzantium persisting into modernity. Consequently, the ways this theology could be a resource for rethinking challenges facing the contemporary Orthodox Church to determine its theological consistency with the Byzantine tradition should be considered.

Rethinking the Challenges of Ecclesiastical Hierarchy

In the introduction, three primary challenges to hierarchy were presented. Having argued for the Byzantine theological construction and negotiation of hierarchy as fundamentally oriented, validated, and constituted by its ability to communicate divinity and being consistent with earlier tradition in at least three thematic domains, it is worth reconsidering these challenges of hierarchy for renewed insight and to survey the limits of the resolutions offered by the hierarchical theological ideal. The application of hierarchy and the interpretation of power and authority in a theological sense is essential to addressing issues with new insight historically and in the present among Orthodox communities.

If we turn again to the inclusivity problem of hierarchy, where its weight is primarily felt in its ecclesiological contexts, we see that the problems are cast in a new light. One example of constructively using the divinely communicative understanding of, and test for, the legitimacy of hierarchy is in the context of internal ecumenical relations among churches of Byzantine theological heritage. In light of Maximus's theological position, the hierarchical ordering of the patriarchates should be according to the correct confession of faith. If, however, each patriarchate is divinely reflective and shares the correct confession of faith, then the question remains how they should be ordered. In the writings of each of the authors presented, stratification and order are divinely reflective (specifically of the orthodox construction of trinitarian and christological belief), so that rank does not infer inequality, but order is also divinely reflective. At the time of its institution, for example, the pentarchy and even the canonical and controversial legislation to rank Constantinople as first after Rome could be read in this divinely reflective light based on the imperial and ecclesiastical state of the

empire.[16] Due to its imperial importance, Constantinople was the source of the other patriarchates, in that from it the others had their protection and conciliar recognition. According to Maximus, however, during his lifetime, Constantinople was no longer hierarchical in the Dionysian sense due to its incorrect confession of faith, and thus Maximus deferred instead to the primacy of Rome because he believed it remained divinely reflective. This gives significant precedent for reconsidering at present the perplexing state of patriarchal and canonical jurisdictions around the Orthodox world that are perceived to be canonically aberrant, and the justifications given in discussion of correcting these situations by reverting to lines of historical rather than theological tradition.[17] Instead of relying solely on the tradition as history in order to resolve these issues, serious and humble reflection should be given to the particular calling of the church in its unified diversity to communicate divinity and realize divine kenotic and thearchical iconicity in the present age.

The question of primacy itself remains an issue historically, and contemporarily. Hierarchically speaking, drawing on Dionysius, every hierarch is an image of the divine hierarch, and a hierarchy of hierarchs does not appear to exist. With Stethatos, however, the various ranks of the episcopacy are mapped onto angelic orders, so that even the hierarchy of hierarchs needs to be reflective of the divine reality. This stratification of episcopal ranks, however, does not necessarily result in one patriarch or hierarch being higher than another, as ultimately Christ is consistently figured as the one true hierarch and source of every hierarchy. Hierarchically speaking, it seems more in-depth and critical evaluations are still needed to determine the question of primacy as indicating more than mere (and by mere I mean divinely reflective and iconographic) ecclesiastical order in terms of more capacity for divine reflectivity at the highest hierarchical ranks. This challenge to hierarchy is more convoluted by the theology and historical circumstances surveyed in this study. On the one hand, stratified order from a single source is viewed as divinely reflective, but on the other hand, the one who coined the term hierarchy and developed the enduring theology behind it admitted of hierarchical peers and no rank being above that of hierarch.

Previous justifications for breaking communion formally and avoiding concelebration of the Eucharist need to be reevaluated for their theological consistency with the trend indicated by the four authors in which the hierarchy is constituted by its ability to divinize and its divine reflectivity.

If, for example, one hierarch acknowledges that Christ is indeed present in the liturgical celebration of his fellow hierarchs but avoids liturgical concelebration based on jurisdictional division or controversies regarding land or personal matters, then his avoidance of the liturgical celebration is unwarranted and if anything not divinely reflective—rendering his authority essentially void (because he neither fulfills the liturgical divine communication to others nor the pastoral reflection of divine likeness). Personal issues and disagreement in no way lessen Christ's divine realization in the liturgy, as Cabasilas makes clear. All "earthly cares" should be "laid aside" in the authoritative exercise of the hierarchical office in order to serve as Christ in relation to others.[18] Likewise, justifications for broader schisms and ecclesiological breaks in communion among Orthodox jurisdictions or among Orthodox and other Christian churches need historical and contemporary reevaluation in light of the thearchical foundations and hierarchical interpretations evidenced in the writings of the four Byzantine authors. Justifications for breaks in communion, even when grounded in differing ecclesiological or administrative conceptions, need to be discussed at the level of divine reflectivity, divine participation, and divine communication, as opposed to issues in authority, historical tradition, or liturgical difference. Even confessional differences need to be evaluated in terms of indicating divine difference, not mere semantics. Ecclesiological identity should be articulated in terms of divine reflectivity and confession necessary to communicate authentic divinizing activity, not in opposition to or reaction to others.

The issues likewise prompted by reflection on the challenge of the exclusivity of hierarchy are also illumined by the theological framing of hierarchy as constituted by divinizing activity and authentic communication of divinity. For example, some have more recently called for a restoration of the female diaconate in the Orthodox Church, and have done so with appeals to a historically past tradition. While some may see this as divinely reflective and pastorally necessary, the justifications if one is going to make a theological argument in the tradition of Maximus or Stethatos does not need to be based on historical fact, but theological witness of truth. With these two authors especially, a changing hierarchical model was proposed to maintain the authenticity of hierarchy as divinely communicative. Perhaps a resource in theological thinking and historical reflection is that the hierarchy does, in its shape and composition, change over time to be more and more divinely reflective. A restoration of a past hierarchical model and

office, if no longer divinely communicative or divinizing, is rather an idolization of the past than continuity with tradition. If, however, this office or a new one—perhaps nothing historically like it in function or appointment—is indeed necessary for the full reflection of who God is believed to be and this is affirmed by the living Body of Christ, then there is no historical or present reason for its prevention. Indeed, as function often is more significant than office, in the case of female ordination, it may be found that many women are already fulfilling unrecognized hierarchic ranks beyond that of the diaconate, and someone like Stethatos would claim that they need to be recognized. Indeed, if as Leonie Liveris suggests and our Byzantine theologians seem to attest, "ecclesiastical authority must be seen in terms of 'service' and not domination," then the sexual demographics of authority in the church may be significantly inverted.[19]

With regard to other exclusions of hierarchy, the exclusion of individuals from the highest ranks of the hierarchy needs to be reevaluated based on divine reflectivity. Therefore, the Byzantine tradition's exclusion of married men and women of any kind from the episcopal offices needs to be justified in its perpetuation historically and at present by being grounded theologically in a belief that the celibate-male, or monastic-male somehow reflects and communicates God more properly and authentically to others than a married man or a woman. This is not to negate the practical implications and influences that have led to the development of celibacy being required at the highest ranks. Indeed, the ability to communicate divinity might be difficult even liturgically if the hierarch were not able to regularly celebrate or travel to liturgy because of certain familial circumstances. The theological justification, the identification and reinforcement of ideals of celibate holiness, however, needs to be founded in the divine image and confession of faith. Otherwise, while the practical preference and assumed necessity of celibacy for the episcopal ranks may be maintained, an openness to the possibility of a married man or woman being called to such a rank and affirmed in that position as legitimate needs to be acknowledged. Exclusion for bodily circumstances from various liturgical functions and participation also needs to be reevaluated historically and at present for the same qualifications to be maintained or held as authentically part of the Byzantine theological tradition rather than mere historical concession or restriction.

Lastly, the conception of hierarchy as divine communication allows for more flexibility in treating the challenges of potential power disparities and

abuses in the context of ecclesiastical order and spiritual authority. On the one hand, there is the preservation of order by correction only being available via the top down, and on the other hand, there is protection for those in positions of seemingly less power by ultimately being subject to and divinized by the Divine Hierarch, and functioning as the living Body of Christ. Historically speaking, the ways in which Dionysius, Maximus, Stethatos, and Cabasilas address issues of spiritual authority in their diverse scenarios while maintaining the goodness of ecclesiastical order and obedience, suggests the need to investigate instances where subordinates traditionally viewed as subverting hierarchical authority could now be read as protecting it by their seeming rejection of the authority over them. Likewise, critiques of hierarchy as oppressive and abusive need to be reconsidered in light of the authority offered subordinates as participants in the Body of Christ and the determination of legitimate authority by divine reflectivity. Similarly, brutal examples of obedience or spiritual leadership in hagiography should be reread in light of the motives subordinates had for staying with their spiritual leader even in times of brutality or nonsensical instruction. These motives should be interrogated to determine what was considered divinely communicative and divinely reflective in a different historical context compared with the present. The engagement evinced in these domains by these four authors attests to a distinct theology of hierarchy grounded in a unanimously accepted conception of power. For these authors there is not just a lofty theology of hierarchy as an unattainable ideal; rather, based on the way these authors display and interact with power, there is the enactment of these ideals in ecclesiastical lived praxis. The hierarchical interpretation, application, and negotiation that adheres to the ideal that hierarchy is good, is only good to the extent it is realized as being grounded in a foundational assumption about power as being thearchical.

Closing Considerations

In order to present the hierarchical insights of four Byzantine authors, I have considered theological ideals not merely in their written theoretical formulation but also read them against the historical, hagiographical, and ritual contexts of their authors. These contexts have proved significant for developing a deeper and more nuanced appreciation for the richness of Byzantine theology broadly conceived as something beyond mere words. Fur-

ther research remains on theological expression in more diverse contexts. While the integrity of the central theological principle of hierarchical order remains, how it is interpreted and applied may vary in ways that shape the understanding of this ideal in historical tradition and contemporary Orthodox theology. Comparisons of this kind allow the bringing together in scholarly consideration historical authors that would otherwise appear primarily disparate. Byzantine theology in the sixth through fourteenth centuries is relevant to the diverse Orthodox theological tradition being formed in the present and understanding the past.

Historically speaking, one example of hierarchical reflection in a different genre, contemporaneous with Maximus the Confessor's writings and then developed hagiographically into the age of Stethatos, is the life and liturgical commemoration of Mary of Egypt. One striking scene from this very popular hagiography that reflects the hierarchical ideal as a theological concept determined and negotiated by divine reflectivity and communication is when the penitent hermitic and mystical Mary debates with the elder priest Zosimas about who should give the blessing at their first encounter. The exchange is as follows:

> "Father Zosimas, it is fitting for you to give a blessing and prayer, for you have been honored with the rank of priest and you have served at the holy altar for many years and have often performed [the sacrament of] the holy gifts [of Eucharist]." Those words cast Zosimas into greater fear and anxiety, and the monk became tarried and bathed in sweat, sighed, and was unable to speak clearly. He said to her with gasping and rapid breath, "It is clear from your appearance, O spiritual mother, that you have long ago departed toward God, and have in great part mortified yourself to the world. Also apparent to me is the grace that has been granted to you [by God], from the fact that you called me by name and addressed me as priest, although you have never seen me before. But since grace is manifested not by clerical rank, but is usually indicated by spiritual attitudes, you should bless me for the sake of the Lord and pray for one who needs your help."[20]

This example, likely from the sixth or seventh century, reflects the complex dynamic of charismatic and institutionalized ecclesiastical authority. In this case, Mary claims Zosimas is her superior even in an arguably nonliturgical context (although one could certainly construe their entire encounter as a type of liturgical-sacramental exchange), based on his priestly

service.[21] Zosimas, however, recognized her charismatic authority and admits that "grace" is not displayed by rank, but "spiritual attitudes," and Mary acquiesces to his request for a blessing. This exchange then ultimately displays the rather complex Byzantine hierarchical dynamic. The charismatic recognizes and defers to the cleric based even in pastoral situations on the divine communicability of the cleric in the liturgical setting, but the cleric also recognizes the authenticity of charismatic authority and defers to it in nonliturgical-sacramental setting. Although in the narrative Zosimas does bring communion to Mary and arguably provides a type of monastic tonsure, confession, and funeral—all priestly divinely communicative functions—Mary is the one who is constructed in the narrative as the exemplar of holiness and the one who foremost communicates divinity.[22] It is clear in the narrative (and from the tradition) that priests and ordained clerics should be reverenced and ranked as superior based not on their own sanctity but on their liturgical function and divine proximity in the sacramental offering. This reverence and respect extends beyond the liturgical space into the pastoral domain, but the authority to function authentically depends on recognition of divine likeness and reflectivity—the rank and respect remains but the authority to act as such outside of that space does not. People approaching the priestly ranks and seeking a blessing do so to receive the blessing from God—not solely from the person of the priest. The charismatic authority or hierarchical reality should likewise be recognized by the priestly ranks and deferred to wherever it is found if it is found to be authentic—as in the case of Mary. The limitations of divine communication are boundless—the recognition of which involves mutual Christ-like humility. Mary and Zosimas are prostrate toward each other in mutual recognition of divine likeness and communication. In this narrative the problematic potential break between priestly Christ-like activity in the ministerial office that does not extend to the person in the character of Zosimas is not present. He is portrayed as a holy priest, who ultimately is still ranked as hierarchically subordinate to a lay woman with a sordid past who is more divinely communicative than he is. Even though hierarchy is not specifically named in this text, the same hierarchical theological conception and dynamic that later is reflected and articulated in Stethatos and Cabasilas is already present in the sixth and seventh century in the hagiography of Mary of Egypt.

The theological conception and negotiation of ecclesiastical hierarchy, order, and authority in the Byzantine theological tradition is not stagnant

or monolithic, but rather an ever-adapting and developing way of thinking and expression that which reflects an unchanging truth amidst changing times and circumstances. The conception of ecclesiastical hierarchy as divinizing activity, as divine communication, and communion with divinity, allows for this flexibility and shifting passage of time and context while still pointing through retrospective affirmation to a fixed truth of an ineffable and unchanging God. The four authors discussed remain united in their identification of authentic authority, order, and hierarchic participation as divinely communicative and determined by such, but at the same time there is diversity among them in how they formulate and express this unity. The dynamic that is reflected is a theological tradition that is ever reflective of the present and in continuity with a past prioritized by divine reflectivity and the manifestation of divine power.

This way of thinking hierarchy, even without naming it as such, has significant implications for historical study and present ecclesiological and theological reflection. This reading of tradition and hierarchy also prompts present-day reevaluation of ecclesiological practice and hierarchical structures. More than just evaluating episcopal oversight as being "canonical" or not based on overlapping jurisdictions, or covering the Orthodox "diaspora" according to ethnic identities, the determination of valid, legitimate, and appropriate hierarchical organization and structure should, in light of the Byzantine hierarchical ideal, be based on affirmation of divine reflectivity and communication grounded in the understanding that power resides with and flows from God alone. The question that must be asked of the past and present is: Does the ecclesiastical hierarchy and its visible order and structure and how it administers to its participants reflect the image of God? Or, is the visible ecclesiastical hierarchy a vestige of the past and concerned with identity maintenance and power in ways that are secondary and subversive to the hierarchical end of divinization? A similar challenge is made historically and at present to every individual in a position of hierarchical (especially ordained) authority. Is one's authority grounded in and reflective of visible and active Christ-likeness evidenced by humble and voluntary self-giving? The bar is set very high, especially beyond the liturgical setting, for one to even claim to be a hierarch or exercise the authority and power of the office. Validation of leadership and authority is thrown into question, but at the same time not open to mass insubordination. Those who judge their superiors must similarly be ever-humbly mindful of their own Christ-likeness and reflective of

striving for divinization at every moment. One does not need to be in a different place or disregard the hierarchy if in any way that hierarchy is still divinely communicative. If it is not, however, then one is justified in rejecting it as not hierarchical at all.

All of this hierarchical reevaluation suggests an ecclesiological reordering and historical rereading is at hand, where the determining factor and guiding foundation for the structure is not adherence to a model of the imperially structured past or even the literal words of canonical legislation. As innovative as it might seem in certain contexts, the most Orthodox thing to do is to identify the hierarchy with divine reflectivity, communication of divinity, divinizing activity, and the christological witness of its members first, and then draw on the historical record of the traditional past to support the present. The symbols of priesthood, the external actions, vestments, and reverences given those ordained are intended to remind individuals precisely about this christological witness and communicate divinity. Without being Christ-like in activity, a hierarch cannot expect to wear the vestments or receive the reverence from subordinates. At the same time, even these seemingly superficial actions are significant in forming the interior person in proper Christ like humility and obedience, and recognition. These conclusions, therefore, do not serve as a call for ecclesiological anarchy or insubordination, but rather for recognition and reconsideration of how hierarchy has been historically and will continue to be determined in Orthodox Christianity as the authentic communication of divine power and production of divine likeness.

Notes

Introduction: Challenge of Hierarchy for Orthodoxy

1. For example, Sergius Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1988), 90–91. Bulgakov provides an excellent discussion of hierarchy, ecclesiology, and a rich conception of "tradition" but still names tradition and the historical record of the Church as the justification for the persistence of hierarchy.

2. Brian Mitchell, "The Problem with Hierarchy: Ordered Relations in God and Man," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (2010): 190.

3. For an example of negating the hierarchies of gender roles, see Ronald W. Pierce, Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, and Gordon D. Fee, *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy* (Leicester, U.K.: InterVarsity Press, 2004).

4. Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God Talk* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), 47–72.

5. Two recent and notably constructive theological exceptions treating ecclesiastical hierarchy in the Christian West are Matthew Levering, *Christ and the Catholic Priesthood: Ecclesiastical Hierarchy and the Pattern of the Trinity* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2010); and Linn Marie Tonstad, "Trinity, Hierarchy, and Difference: Mapping the Christian Imaginary" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2009).

6. One prominent example of such writings directly responding to the practical and ideological concerns of spiritual leadership in the Byzantine tradition is John Chrysostom, *Six Books on the Priesthood*, trans. Graham Neville (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996).

7. For a brief overview and several examples, see Sabine Huebner, "Currencies of Power: The Veniality of Offices in the Later Roman Empire," in *The Power of*

Religion in Late Antiquity, ed. Andrew Cain and Noel Lenski (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate Publishing, 2009), 161–86.

8. The development of Byzantine vestments, for example, and their relation to imperial insignia is explored in Warren Woodfin, *The Embodied Icon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

9. For instance, one example is the Photian Schism (863–67). See Tia Kolbaba, *Inventing Latin Heretics: Byzantines and the Filioque in the Ninth Century* (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Medieval Institute Publications, 2008); and Francis Dvornik, *The Photian Schism: History and Legend* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948).

10. Relevant discussion and examples of this type of identity construction both historically and in modernity can be found in George Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou, eds., *Orthodox Constructions of the West* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013).

11. See Bulgakov, *Orthodox Church*, 41; Woodfin, *Embodied Icon*, 206. Woodfin explains that "the Orthodox ecclesiastical hierarchy was always conditioned by a tension between the universal sovereignty of the Patriarch of Constantinople and the full sacramental authority of each bishop within his diocese. If apologists for patriarchal privilege could claim that the Church has 'Christ as its head and the patriarch as his image,' their claims were counterbalanced by the idea that each bishop fully represented Christ in the Eucharistic liturgy."

12. See, for example, the interpretation of Canons IX and X of the First Ecumenical Council in Nicodemus and Agapius, *The Rudder of the Orthodox Catholic Church: The Compilation of the Holy Canons*, trans. D. Cummings (Brookfield, Mass.: The Orthodox Christian Educational Society, 1957), 177–78.

13. One relevant example is found in "Chapter 3: The Life of Mary of Egypt," trans. Maria Kouli, in *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints Lives in English Translation*, ed. Alice-Mary Talbot (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1996), 65–94. Mary of Egypt's hagiography includes the very significant beginning and ending of her ascetic life with sacramental Eucharistic participation, suggesting that its author felt the need to address this tension.

14. A study of the female diaconate specific to the Eastern Orthodox tradition is found in Kyriaki Karidoyanes FitzGerald, *Women Deacons in the Orthodox Church* (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Press, 1998). I qualify that the male deaconate "somewhat erroneously" became a frequent brief stop on the way to higher priestly ranks, but it is worth noting in the Dionysian hierarchical vision, the higher hierarchic ranks contain all the lower ones within them. Thus, in practice and in theological order, the deaconate is a necessary steppingstone to the priesthood, and the priesthood is a necessary steppingstone to the episcopacy.

15. Kyriaki Karidoyanes FitzGerald, "Toward a Complete Expression of the Diaconate: Discerning the Ministry Women Deacons," presented at the SCOBA Bishops Conference (Chicago: 2006), 8. FitzGerald explains that "According to the Church of Greece, Statement of the Holy Synod dated 8 October 2004 'the Holy Synod confirmed by a majority vote that: (a) the institution (*thesmos*) of deaconesses established in antiquity and rooted in the Holy Canons was never abolished and (b) depended upon presenting discriminating opportunities, the regional Bishop may consecrate (*kathosiosi*) senior nuns of Holy Monasteries of their Eparchy; in order to address the needs of their Holy Monasteries, and only with the understanding that the deaconess is not appointed to the rank (*bathmos*) of priesthood.'"

16. This tradition follows the instructions given in 1 Timothy 3:2 for the ἐπίσκοπος to be monogamously married.

17. By the Quinisext Council in 692, it is clear that the celibacy of bishops was the predominating and prescribed norm in the Christian East, as is indicated in Canons XII and XLVII (Nicodemus and Agapius, *Rudder* 303, 347).

18. Ibid., 192–6, 305–7, 509, 629–30, 720.

19. The case study on spiritual fatherhood centered on the controversial Symeon the New Theologian is helpful in indicating the difficulties of spiritual fatherhood and hierarchical and spiritual power dynamics; see H. J. M. Turner, *St. Symeon The New Theologian: The New Theologian and Spiritual Fatherhood* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1990).

20. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "We Are Church: A Kingdom of Priests" (Keynote Address Presented at the Women's Ordination WorldWide [WOW] Second International Ecumenical Conference, Ottawa, Canada, July 22, 2005): 12.

21. Paul Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to Their Influence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 30.

22. See, for discussions of hierarchy in other religions and society more broadly, Mary Douglas, "A Feeling for Hierarchy," in *Believing Scholars*, ed. James L. Heft (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 94–120. Also, John N. Bartholomew, "A Sociological View of Authority in Religious Organizations," *Review of Religious Research* 23, no. 2 (1981): 118–32. The Christian theological background of the term originates with Dionysius the Areopagite as will be discussed below, but the establishment of the particularly Christian ecclesiastical organizational structure later associated with the term could be located in the Pastoral Epistles (particularly 1Timothy) as well. Parallels and potential influences in social organization as well as Judaism should be considered as well. An overview of precursors to Dionysius's thought more broadly can be found in Alexander Golitzin, *Et Introibo Ad Altare Dei: The Mystagogy of Dionysius Areopagita: With Special Reference to Its Predecessors in the Eastern Christian Tradition* (Thessaloniki: Patriarchikon Idruma Paterikon Meleton, 1994).

23. One notable exception to this scholarly consensus is Rosemary Arthur, *Pseudo-Dionysius as Polemicist: The Development and Purpose of the Angelic Hierarchy in Sixth Century Syria* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2008), 18. Arthur suggests the term hierarchy may actually have originated with the fifth-century author of the *Book of the Holy Hierotheos*, Stephen Bar Sudhaili.

24. In the present work all English citations of the *Corpus Dionysiacum* come from *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, ed. Colm Luibhéid and Paul Rorem (New York: Paulist Press, 1987). Hereafter, abbreviated citations will be given with reference to Dionysius, the text, and the section followed by Luibhéid and the page numbers in this edition in parenthesis. Compare the interpretation of hierarchy given by Dionysius with the discussion of hierarchy in Bulgakov, "Chapter 3: The Hierarchy," in *Orthodox Church*, 37–54.

25. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* I.3 (Luibhéid 197–98).

26. For a discussion on the relationship between hierarchy and divine similitude, see Adrian Pabst, *Metaphysics: The Creation of Hierarchy* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012), 100–113.

27. Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius*, 30.

28. See John of Damascus, *Three Treatises on the Divine Images*, trans. Andrew Louth (Crestwood, N.Y.: Saint Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003); and Gregory of Palamas, *The Triads*, trans. Nicholas Gendle (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1983).

29. *Dispute at Bizya*, in *Maximus the Confessor and His Companions: Documents from Exile*, ed. and trans. Pauline Allen and Bronwen Neil (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 85.

30. Maximus, *The Church's Mystagogy*, in *Maximus Confessor: Selected Writings*, trans. George Berthold (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 184. See the numerous citations noted on pages 219–25.

31. Ibid., *Four Centuries on Charity*, II.21, in Maximus the Confessor, *The Ascetic Life, The Four Centuries on Charity*, trans. Polycarp Sherwood (Mahwah, N.J.: Newman Press, 1955), 156.

32. Maximus, *Trial of Maximus*, in *Maximus Confessor*, trans. Berthold, 17–31.

33. Niketas Stethatos, *Opuscules et lettres*, ed. J. Darrouzés, *Sources Chrétiennes* 81 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1961). Hereafter, this edition will be cited as "*SC* 81" followed by the page number. All translations from this edition are my own.

34. Nicholas Cabasilas, *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, trans. J. M. Hussey and P. A. McNulty (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2002); ibid., *The Life in Christ*, trans. Carmino J. deCatanzaro (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974).

35. Ibid., *Discourse Concerning Illegal Acts of Officials Daringly Committed against Things Sacred*, in "Nicholas Cabasilas' 'Anti-Zealot' Discourse: A Reinter-

pretation," ed. Ihor Ševčenko, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 11 (1957), 79–171. All citations of primary texts from this article are my own translation.

36. See, for example, Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997); Karl Marx, *The German Ideology* (New York: Prometheus Books, 1998); Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977); and Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1970).

37. Butler, *Psychic Life*, 2.

38. One such example of a recent engagement that is more oriented toward specific historical examples of ecclesiastical power is Pamela Armstrong, ed., *Authority in Byzantium* (Farnham, Surrey, U.K.: Ashgate, 2013). Theological engagement with the question of power and authority in contemporary Orthodoxy, but lacking critical theoretical or historical engagement, can be found in John Chryssavgis, "Obedience—Hierarchy and Asceticism: The Concept of Spiritual Authority in the Church," *St. Vladimir's Seminary Theological Quarterly* 34 (1991): 49–60.

39. The fruitfulness of engaging Byzantine sources alongside contemporary critical theory to consider other topics and points of intersection has been demonstrated by a number of recent scholarly contributions such as Derek Krueger, *Liturgical Subjects: Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative, and the Formation of the Self in Byzantium* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).

40. See, for example, the characterization in Elizabeth Jeffreys, John F. Haldon, and Robin Cormack, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 702, that

> for Dionysios, and for Byzantine theology in general, kataphatic theology is not so much opposed to apophatic theology as grounded upon it. In his activity in the *oikonomia*, God reveals something of himself, and that we can and must affirm in faith; but as we seek to follow it back and apply it to God in himself, we must acknowledge that God transcends even our most lofty conceptions, and that ultimately we are most true to God's revelation in ultimately denying it. This introduces into theology a tentativeness, characteristic of Byzantine theology at its best, though often quite lacking; it also disposes theology to an openness to imagery, both literary and visual, rather than reliance on logic and concepts, though these latter have their place.

41. These characterizations are primarily developed in Marx, *German Ideology*; Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*; Arendt, *On Violence*; and Butler, *Psychic Life*.

42. The term "thearchy" is in this context referring to Dionysius, *Divine Names,* 13.3 (Luibhéid 129). Dionysius refers to "thearchy" as the "Cause of everything, as the One."

43. Marx, *German Ideology*; Jeffery Isaac, *Power and Marxist Theory: A Realist View* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1987).

44. Arendt, *On Violence*, 45.

45. A succinct presentation of Arendt's position on authority developed in *On Violence* is presented in Slavoj Žižek, *Living in the End Times* (New York: Verso, 2011), 388.

46. Arendt, *On Violence*, 44.

47. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (New York: Random House, 1978), 101.

48. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 194.

49. Ibid., 27.

50. Michel Foucault, "Afterword: The Subject and Power," in *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, ed. H. L. Dreyfus and P. Rabinow (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 213–15.

51. Amy Allen, "Performativity as Critical Theory," *Constellations* 5, no. 4 (1998): 463.

52. Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theatre Journal* 40, no. 4 (1998): 519.

53. Ibid., 524.

54. Ibid., 521; See also, Maximus the Confessor, *Ambiguum 7*, in *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*, trans. Paul Blowers and Robert Wilken (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 45–74.

55. Amy Allen, *The Power of Feminist Theory: Domination, Resistance, Solidarity* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1999).

56. Compare with Dionysius, *Divine Names*, 8.2 (Luibhéid 110).

57. John Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1975), 82; Eric Perl, *Theophany: The Neoplatonic Philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008); Peter Norton, *Episcopal Elections 250–600: Hierarchy and Popular Will in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

58. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.

59. Woodfin, *Embodied Icon*; 1 Cor. 1:18 and Phil. 2:5–8.

60. Marx, *German Ideology*, 47.

61. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* I.4 (Luibhéid 198).

62. Ibid., 1.1–4 (Luibhéid 195–98) and *Celestial Hierarchy*, 3.1 (Luibhéid 153–54).

63. For example, Dionysius, *Epistle VIII* (Luibhéid 245).

64. For some of the historical issues complicating the ideal of hierarchy in Byzantium, see Gilbert Dagron, *Emperor and Priest: The Imperial Office in Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and Peter Norton, *Episcopal Elections 250–600*.

1. Dionysius the Areopagite's Divinizing Hierarchy

1. A notable exception is Rosemary Arthur, *Pseudo-Dionysius as Polemicist: The Development and Purpose of the Angelic Hierarchy in Sixth Century Syria* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2008). Arthur suggests that Dionysius is actually using Stephen Bar Sudhaili and correcting his construction of hierarchy instead of the other way around.

2. Alexander Golitzin, *Et Introibo Ad Altare Dei: The Mystagogy of Dionysius Areopagita: With Special Reference to Its Predecessors in the Eastern Christian Tradition* (Thessaloniki: Patriarchikon Idruma Paterikon Meleton, 1994), 39, 41; Andrew Louth, *Denys the Areopagite* (London: Continuum Books, 1989), 39, 52; Filip Ivanovic, *Symbol & Icon: Dionysius the Areopagite and the Iconoclastic Crisis* (Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick Publications, 2010), 29. Golitzin offers several definitions (almost as many as Dionysius) in his attempt to sufficiently name Dionysian hierarchy He rightly prioritizes the divinizing foundation of hierarchy, saying that "our hierarchy is, first and most obviously, the means given us to know and to share in God," but later gives a more nuanced list of hierarchy's characteristics that follow from this definition. Golitzin has with attentiveness pointed to hierarchy as divinizing, has described its qualities as divinely participative and communicative, and has provided Dionysius with a patristic pedigree just as strong as his Neoplatonic one. Andrew Louth on the other hand explains the hierarchies in terms of revelation emphasizing the theophanic nature of hierarchy, calling hierarchies "the outreach of God's alluring love" and "vehicles of revelation"—which is also nothing other than divinizing. Ivanovic similarly notes that "hierarchy is the realization of deification."

3. Charles Stang, "The Beginning and End of All Hierarchy," in *The Open Body: Essays in Anglican Ecclesiology*, ed. Zachary Guiliano and Charles Stang (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 114–15; Paul Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to Their Influence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 58; Ysabel de Andia, *Henosis: L'union à Dieu chez Denys l'Aréopagite* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1996), 174.

4. Alexander Golitzin, *Mystagogy: A Monastic Reading of Dionysius the Areopagita,* ed. Bogdan Bucur (Collegeville, Minn.: Cistercian Publications, 2013), 221.

5. Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius*, 31. Rorem explains: "The word hierarchy quickly developed a meaning far removed from the Dionysian usage and in the Middle Ages came to mean the upper echelons of clerical authority, even though the original author's churchly hierarchy had consisted of sacraments, local clergy only and laity."

6. Andrew Louth, "The Reception of Dionysius in the Byzantine World: Maximus to Palamas," *Modern Theology* 24, no. 4 (2008): 585–99; Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius,* 31. Christian Schäfer, *The Philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2006), 14–21. Schäfer explains that the *Corpus Dionysiacum*

is first mentioned by Severus of Antioch, and four years later a synod in Constantinople rejected it because of its monophysite tendencies and declared it "pseudo-epigraphic."

7. Vladimir Kharlamov, *The Beauty of the Unity and the Harmony of the Whole: The Concept of Theosis in the Theology of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite* (Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock, 2009), 215; John Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1975), 109. Kharlamov notes that the ecclesiastical hierarchy as described by Dionysius could represent a type of "institutional deification" while Meyendorff claims that Dionysius's ecclesiastical hierarchy could lead to a "sort of magical clericalism."

8. See, for example, Brian Mitchell, "The Problem with Hierarchy: Ordered Relations in God and Man," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (2010).

9. An excellent recent overview of the scholarship on Dionysius's dating, provenance, and early reception can be found in Charles Stang, *Apophasis and Pseudonymity in Dionysius the Areopagite: "No longer I"* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 12–27.

10. Arthur, *Pseudo-Dionysius as Polemicist*, 13; Louth, *Denys*, 14; Paul Gavrilyuk, "Baptism in Pseudo-Dionysius's *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*," *Studia Liturgica* 39, no. 1 (2009): 1–14.

11. Stang, *Apophasis*, 17. Stang has observed the complexity of this situation suggesting the Syriac translation of the *CD* actually antedates the Greek version that we currently have access to through the lineage and adjustments of John of Scythopolis. While some limited consideration of the Syriac translation may be helpful, this book will primarily consider the mediated Greek because the primary focus is on the Byzantine reception of Dionysius's hierarchic discourse.

12. Andrew Louth, "The Reception of Dionysius in the Byzantine World: Maximus to Palamas," *Modern Theology* 24, no. 4 (2008): 585–99. The use of Dionysius in the christological and Palamite controversies is particularly noteworthy.

13. Meyendorff, *Christ,* 92; Jaroslav Pelikan, *Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1991), 348; Arthur, *Pseudo-Dionysius as Polemicist*, 101ff; Schäfer, *Philosophy*, 19.

14. Alexander Kazhdan and Giles Constable, *People and Power in Byzantium: An Introduction to Modern Byzantine Studies* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1982), 90.

15. In the present work all English citations of the *Corpus Dionysiacum* come from *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, ed. Colm Luibhéid and Paul Rorem (New York: Paulist Press, 1987). Hereafter, abbreviated citations will be given with reference to Dionysius, the text, and the section followed by Luibhéid and the page numbers in this edition in parenthesis. Dionysius, *Epistle VIII* (Luibhéid 276).

16. See, for example, Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros: The Christian Idea of Love*, trans. Philip S. Watson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 576.

17. Stang, *Apophasis*, 44 and 197ff. Golitzin, *Et Introibo Ad Altare Dei* also summarizes and responds to these critiques.

18. Stang, *Apophasis,* 197–207. Stang resolves the issue of the pseudonym as a type of apophatic ascetic practice, but does not focus on the hierarchical implications of this practice.

19. Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius*, 12.

20. Dionysius, *Divine Names*, 13.3 (Luibhéid 127).

21. See also Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 2.1 (Luibhéid 201).

22. Ibid., 1.1–4 (Luibhéid 195–98); *Celestial Hierarchy*, 3.1 (Luibhéid 153–54).

23. Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius*, 170. Rorem lists multiple definitions without resolution.

24. See, for example, Sarah Klitenic Wear and John Dillon, *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist Tradition: Despoiling the Hellenes* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2007); Ysabel de Andia, *Henosis*; and Schäfer, *Philosophy*.

25. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 5.1 (Luibhéid 233).

26. Ibid., 1.3 (Luibhéid 198).

27. Andrew Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition: From Plato to Denys* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 158. Dionysius's definition of hierarchy in triadic terms hearkens back to Evagrius and the Neoplatonic primary Triad of the Mind, Soul, and the One. Dionysius's three hierarchies, if categorized as Louth does, fit neatly with Proclus's three levels of reality—that is, the henads, intelligences, and souls are paralleled in the thearchy, the celestial, and the ecclesiastical hierarchies, or more clearly "the Trinity, angels, and men," and it is because of Dionysius's Proclean adaptation that all the hierarchies are triadic as well.

28. Valentina Izmirlieva, *All the Names of the Lord* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 41. Izmirlieva summarizes this seemingly paradoxical dynamic, explaining that "in God himself, as Dionysius never tires of asserting, unity predominates over differentiation. If (human) meaning is contingent on distinctions, then the Trinity collapses meaning as we know it, together with all the ground rules of binary thought and hierarchical logic, and opens an epistemological space where opposites are not mutually exclusive."

29. Ronald F. Hathaway, *Hierarchy and the Definition of Order in the Letters of Pseudo-Dionysius: A Study in the Form and Meaning of the Pseudo-Dionysian Writings* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1970), 4, 38, 50.

30. Eric Perl, *Theophany: The Neoplatonic Philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008), 78.

31. Izmirlieva, *All the Names,* 41.

32. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 2.1 (Luibhéid 201).

33. Izmirlieva, *All the Names,* 41.

34. Dionysius, *Divine Names*, 8.3 (Luibhéid 111).

35. Ibid., 8.5 (Luibhéid 116).

36. Perl, *Theophany*, 78. Perl summarizes this dynamic, neatly reflecting on the Neoplatonic heritage of Dionysius, saying "the very being of all things, their procession from and reversion to God, consists in their hierarchical relations of procession and reversion to one another."

37. Dionysius, *Divine Names*, 8.2 (Luibhéid 111).

38. Perl, *Theophany*, 77. Perl has outlined this dynamic explaining that divine participation is precisely fulfilling one's "proper place" within the hierarchy and this fulfillment is precisely from that position "rightly relating to other beings, above, below, and coordinate with it in the universal hierarchy" so that ultimately he can claim that "Dionysian hierarchy, therefore, has nothing to do with domination and subservience, but only with love, the love of all things for one another which is the love of God in them all."

39. Perl, *Theophany*, 80.

40. Dionysius, *Celestial Hierarchy*, 3.1 (Luibhéid 153).

41. René Roques, *L'univers dionysien: Structure hiérarchique du monde selon le Pseudo-Denys* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1954), 296.

42. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy,* 1.3 (Luibhéid 197).

43. Perl, *Theophany*, 80. "What all things participate in, each according to its rank, is God who is Love, Ecstasy, Overflow itself. Since in God, as love, interiority coincides with exteriority, so for any being, its interiority, its identity, its selfhood, which is the presence of God in it, coincides with its exteriority, its relations with other beings. The hierarchical activity of beings, their love for one another, is the presence in them of love itself."

44. Louth, *Origins*, 171; Jeffrey Fisher, "The Theology of Dis/Similarity: Negation in Pseudo-Dionysius," *Journal of Religion* (2001), 546. Louth parallels the hierarchies with cataphatic theology as a divine externalization while apophatic theology is the soul's ascent to God, connects the external and internal the apophatic and cataphatic as one divinizing activity—which I would claim is hierarchy. He explains: "The soul is involved both in God's manifestation outwards through the soul and also in her own movement inwards into God; and the two are indissolubly linked. We have already seen that the soul's role within the hierarchy is to be as closely united as possible with that divine energy which establishes it in the hierarchy. The ultimate fulfillment of that role is by the way of apophatic, mystical union with God."

45. Perl, *Theophany*, 65. Perl's comment that hierarchy in Dionysius is viewing "the whole of reality" as the "differentiated presence of God" aptly points to the pervasiveness of hierarchy in the Dionysian corpus as well as what it accomplishes—it communicates God in this world and makes humans able to receive and participate in God through it.

46. For a philosophical study of cataphasis, apophasis, and hierarchy with particular reference to Dionysius, see Adrian Pabst, *Metaphysics: The Creation of Hierarchy* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing, 2012).

47. Stang, *Apophasis*, 205.

48. Louth, *Origins*, 166. Louth explains that for Dionysius, ascent up the hierarchy is actually an internal, constant, more perfect union with the divine activity of the hierarchy.

49. Fisher, "The Theology of Dis/Similarity," 545.

50. Dionysius, *Celestial Hierarchy*, 3.2 (Luibhéid 154).

51. Ibid., *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 1.4 (Luibhéid 198).

52. Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius*, 58.

53. Alexander Golitzin, "Liturgy and Mysticism: The Experience of God in Eastern Orthodox Christianity," *Pro Ecclesia* 2 (1999): 172–73. "For Dionysius the Glory of God, the heavenly fire, and especially the divine light is present in Christ, who in turn appears on the altar of the consecrated Eucharistic elements and in the heart—or intellect—of the baptized Christian." Golitzin aptly notes that "Much more than the famous 'darkness' . . . it is fire and especially light which are associated throughout the corpus with the *visio dei*," and as Dionysius has stated, the hierarchy is the vision of God.

54. Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Light of the World: A Basic Image in Early Christian Thought* (New York: Harper, 1962), 81.

55. Ibid.; cf. the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.

56. Dionysius, *Divine Names*, 2.1 (Luibhéid 59).

57. Dionysius, *Celestial Hierarchy*, 3.2 (Luibhéid 154); *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 2.1 (Luibhéid 200).

58. Ibid., *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 1.3–4 (Luibhéid 197–98).

59. Ibid., 3.2 (Luibhéid 210).

60. Ibid., 1.3 (Luibhéid 198).

61. See 1 John 4:8.

62. Fisher, "Theology of Dis/Similarity," 546. Fisher summarizes this appropriately stating that "Perfection, at least in terms of the hierarchy, is not in union per se but, rather, in 'a certain activity'" a certain activity that is the communication of divinity.

63. Dionysius, *Divine Names*, 8.9 (Luibhéid 114).

64. Perl, *Theophany*, 71.

65. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 2.1 (Luibhéid 200). Ibid., 5.1 (Luibhéid 233).

66. Louth, *Origins*, 165. Louth explains: "The purpose of the hierarchies is assimilation to God and union with him. This is accomplished by each being fulfilling its proper role in the hierarchy" which makes the hierarchy a "perfect theophany: each part in its own proportion manifesting the glory of God."

67. Perl, *Theophany*, 72. Perl explains this dynamic saying "because the activity of every level in any hierarchy is the presence of God in the mode proper to that level . . . all things, at every level, participate directly in God in the manner appropriate to them. Therefore, the hierarchical structure of reality, far from separating the lower orders of being from God, is itself the very ground of his immediate presence in all things. Every being participates directly in God precisely in and by occupying its proper place within the cosmic hierarchy."

68. Sarah Coakley and Charles Stang, *Rethinking Dionysius the Areopagite* (Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 177ff. Coakley offers two chapters presenting the modern appropriations of the Dionysian tension between space and place via Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion.

69. Dionysius, *Celestial Hierarchy*, 3.2 (Luibhéid 154).

70. Izmirlieva, *All the Names,* 43. It is only through the hierarchies and submission to them that one is truly able to become free of "their rule" (Perl, *Theophany*, 73). It is paradoxically as Perl concludes that, "all things participate equally in God by being unequal, by occupying different ranks in the hierarchical order of the whole."

71. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 1.2 (Luibhéid 197).

72. Ibid., *Divine Names*, 2.11 (Luibhéid 67).

73. Ibid., 2.5 (Luibhéid 62).

74. Ibid., 7.3 (Luibhéid 108).

75. Kharlamov, *Beauty,* 231.

76. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 1.III.6 (Luibhéid 207).

77. Ibid., 5.3 (Luibhéid 236).

78. Ibid., 6.II (Luibhéid 245–46). cf. tonsure of monk vs. ordination.

79. Ibid., *Epistle VIII*.2 (Luibhéid 275).

80. Ibid., *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 1.3 (Luibhéid 197).

81. Ibid., 2.2 (Luibhéid 201).

82. John McGuckin, "Origen's Doctrine of the Priesthood," *Clergy Review* 70, no. 8 (1985): 284.

83. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 5.4 (Luibhéid 236).

84. Ibid., *Celestial Hierarchy*, 3.3 (Luibhéid 155).

85. Arthur, *Pseudo-Dionysius as Polemicist*, 19.

86. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 3.1 (Luibhéid 209).

87. Louth, *Origins*, 163.

88. Kharlamov, *Beauty,* 206. Kharlamov notes that "the sacraments in Pseudo-Dionysius are the *modus operandi* for the process of deification in human beings," but then goes on to conclude that "the sacramental and liturgical performances are sacred symbols, the perceptible tokens that point to conceptual things." One must keep in mind, however, that for Dionysius the "conceptual"

does not involve a conception of God intellectually, but rather a participation in God ultimately grounded in doxalogical unknowing.

89. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy,* 3.6 (Luibhéid 215).

90. Ibid.

91. A summary discussion comparing Dionysius to Gregory of Palamas on the "energies/activities" of God, see Louth, "Reception of Dionysius," 596.

92. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 5.1 (Luibhéid 233).

93. Two studies documenting the of the complications surrounding episcopal elections in early Byzantium are Peter Norton, *Episcopal Elections 250–600: Hierarchy and Popular Will in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); and Johan Leemans et al., eds., *Episcopal Elections in Late Antiquity* (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter GmbH & Co. KG, 2011).

94. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 1.4 (Luibhéid 198). Hathaway, *Hierarchy*, 39, notes: "It is evident that such a hierarchic order is not prescribed in Scripture; Ps.-Dionysius writes as if it were for reasons of his own."

95. Golitzin, *Et Introibo Ad Altare*, 169. Golitzin takes the scriptural influence and foundation of the hierarchy more to heart, stating that "the full composition of the *EH* is thus the Scriptural revelation expressed in the triad of sacraments whose saving activity is realized in the subordinate triads of the clergy, the ministers of that activity, and of the laity who receive the clergy's ministrations."

96. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 1.5 (Luibhéid 199).

97. Golitzin, *Et Introibo Ad Altare*, 160. Golitzin drawing on both Byzantine ideals of iconography and Neoplatonism calls the ecclesiastical hierarchy "an active power and living participation in the divine archetype."

98. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 1.5 (Luibhéid 199). Louth, *Origins*, 165. Louth names this communication "theophany" which is simultaneously an image of God and the bringing about of that image.

99. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy,* 1.3 (Luibhéid 197).

100. Arthur, *Pseudo-Dionysius*, 13, cites Sebastian Brock, *The Luminous Eye: The Spiritual World Vision of Ephrem the Syrian* (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 1992), 180; Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 193. Brock explains that "his reference to deacons as cleansers suggests that he knows Syriac, although he nowhere admits it." Arthur claims a Syrian "liturgical background" for the *CD*, but admits the location of such a community could be in "Syria, Palestine, Alexandria, or Constantinople." Golitzin also highlights the Syrian influence on the *CD*, explaining, "the Dionysian hierarchies are based in great part on ascetical traditions, especially of Syrian provenance, and are designed to reconcile the ascetic visionary tradition with the sacramentally based polity of the Church."

101. The fullest discussion of "dissimilar similarities" is actually in Dionysius, *Celestial Hierarchy*, 2 (Luibhéid 189).

102. Filip Ivanovic, *Symbol & Icon,* 60: "Images for Dionysius have the role to: designate the spiritual essences; elevate man to them, and truly reveal the world of the superbeing on the level of being. This idea of image is the main modality through which the union between the levels of super-being and being can be realized. Only in the image and through it is the unknowable unity of God's transcendence and immanence possible."

103. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 3.I (Luibhéid 210).

104. Peter Struck, *The Birth of a Symbol: Ancient Readers at the Limits of Their Texts* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004), 221, 263. Struck offers the explanation that "the language of ineffable words, devotional statues that represent what is beyond all representation, and traces of the transcendent divine buried inside the mundane world—all three of these transactions combine and recombine in the works of Proclus and Pseudo-Dionysius."

105. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 3.2 (Luibhéid 204).

106. Ibid., 3.8 (Luibhéid 208).

107. Ibid., 6.II (Luibhéid 245–46).

108. Struck, *Birth of a Symbol*, 276. Struck notes that a symbol in Neoplatonism has an "ontological connection" to its referent.

109. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 7.III.7 (Luibhéid 256).

110. Ibid., 3.III.12 (Luibhéid 221).

111. Ibid., 7.III.7 (Luibhéid 256).

112. Cf. Averil Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

113. Kharlamov, *Beauty*, 215.

114. Louth, *Origins*, 162.

115. Dionysius, *Celestial Hierarchy*, 1 (Luibhéid 163).

116. Ibid., *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 5.1.1 (Luibhéid 233).

117. Ibid., 5.I.3 (Luibhéid 235).

118. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 7.III.6 (Luibhéid 255).

119. Golitzin, *Et Introibo Ad Altare*, 213. Golitzin explains: "The Areopagite has been compelled, both by intent or thrust of his vision and the very mode or style with which he has chosen to clothe that vision, to present his readers with a markedly—if not extraordinary—idealized picture of the Church structure and functioning. It is this idealization that, allowing for the ambiguities noted above, requires the virtual identification of law and grace, of office and person, in as much as the latter two 'orders' are both expressed by the single 'order' (*taxis*) of 'hierarchy' and this is so even though not all (rather few, in fact) bishops are 'holy.'"

120. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 7.III.6 (Luibhéid 255); Louth, *Denys*, 65. Louth explains that the priestly orders appear to receive their authority not only from their priestly consecration but also "from their intrinsic moral and

intellectual qualities" so that it almost appears that "the efficacy of a priest's ministrations depends upon his own holiness and purity."

121. Louth, *Denys*, 66. Louth points out: "The Eastern Church has never worked out a formal doctrine of sacramental validity (nor involved itself in the complications it has introduced)" the hierarchy is a network of relationships that image and communicate the divine so that "the correlation between the worth of the priest and the dignity of his office is imperative."

122. Ibid., 74; Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 5.I.4–7 (Luibhéid 236–39).

123. Ibid., 3.I.10 (Luibhéid 219).

124. Ibid., 3.III.12 (Luibhéid 221).

125. Ibid., 5.III.5 (Luibhéid 241).

126. Ibid., 5.III.6 (Luibhéid 242).

127. Roques, *L'univers dionysien*, 283.

128. Dionysius, *Epistle VIII* (Luibhéid 272).

129. Kharlamov, *Beauty,* 171, provides an overview of this scholarly trend.

130. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 7.III.7 (Luibhéid 256).

131. Kharlamov, *Beauty*, 215.

132. Dionysius, *Epistle VIII* (Luibhéid 272).

133. Ibid. (Luibhéid 275).

134. Arthur, *Pseudo-Dionysius as Polemicist*, 160.

135. Dionysius, *Epistle VIII*.4 (Luibhéid 276).

136. Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius*, 30, 45n31. Interestingly, *Epistle VIII*, from which this example is taken, was used by Pope Nicholas I (858–67) as a prooftext to Emperor Michael III (842–67) that clergy are exempt from their lay subordinate correction and judgment, which would have included the emperor himself. Theodore the Studite (CXX) argued similarly based on this text that a patriarch could not be corrected by an emperor, but only by his hierarchical peers.

137. Dionysius, *Epistle VIII*.3 (Luibhéid 275).

138. Ibid. (Luibhéid 274–75).

139. Kharlamov, *Beauty,* 215. Kharlamov explains:

> The roles in the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Pseudo-Dionysius present an idealistic dream of the purely speculative and factitiously balanced organization of perfect church bureaucracy, where the place within the system or rank connotes and presupposes not only level of authority but also individualistically based level of sacred significance. This at the same time corresponds to the larger scheme of cosmic deifying activities. The role of the bishop, who is "the deiform hierarch," is distantly reminiscent of Ignatius of Antioch's understanding of the role of the bishop, who presides in the church "in the place of God." For Ignatius, bishops represent throughout the world the mind of

> Christ and are subject only to God. Here we see the earliest form or prototype for what could be termed “institutional deification” in Christian theology, where the emphasis is predominantly on the “deification” of the Episcopal status, which Pseudo-Dionysius advances even further by assigning a “deifying” function to the Episcopal office. Logically followed, the Dionysian representation of the ecclesiastical hierarchy could lead, in Meyendorff’s opinion, to a “sort of magical clericalism.”

140. Izmirlieva, *All the Names*, 40. It is as Izmirlieva notes, “yet another dialectical pair, that of similar dissimilarities. If hierarchy is the pattern of gradual manifestation of the divine in the creature on a descending scale for proximity (or ‘differentiation’), depending on its position in the hierarchy, divine manifestations are—to varying degrees—both similar and dissimilar to the divinity.”

141. Dionysius, *Epistle VIII*.3 (Luibhéid 274–75).

142. Ibid.

143. See George Demacopoulos, *Five Models of Spiritual Direction in the Early Church* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).

144. Golitzin, *Et Introibo Ad Altare*, 168 Golitzin points out that the “exteriorization of grace” and the “interiorization of God” in the hierarchies cannot be separated because “both are held within the single icon of our hierarchy.” As such, the dynamic between the internal and external realities imply for Golitzin a type of “tension within the single taxis of our hierarchy” which “is limited by, and points toward, death and the resolution of the future age” being ultimately eschatological in fulfillment so that “the ranks and functions embraced by the hierarchical taxis truly reveal the active power and, as it were, shape of grace, but they are also open. They reveal and demand both a vocation and a hope. This, we maintain, is the very nature of our hierarchy as icon: it is both the reality of grace and the promise of grace, the revelation in fact of him who is present and still to come.”

145. Louth, *Denys*, 26.

146. Ibid., “Reception of Dionysius,” 582. Louth suggests Dionysius was writing to his fellow monks and commenting on monastic order and obedience during a time when monastic authority frequently and publically arose to challenge the ordained authority of the episcopacies. This writing then could be seen as a textual production responding to tensions between ecclesiastical ranks and a way to pacify them. Demacopoulos, *Five Models*, 16–7, notes that Gregory of Nazianzus marries the tradition of institutionalized sacerdotal qualification with ascetic charisma.

147. Valerie Karras, “Female Deacons in the Byzantine Church,” *Church History* 73, no. 2 (2004): 272–316.

148. Andrew Louth, *Denys.* Louth has observed the oddity of gender being omitted, especially from the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, where if any bit of Diony-

sius's supposed historical, or for that matter apostolic, situation are correct, Dionysius would have encountered and likely been familiar with the female deaconate, as well as female monastic forms.

149. Andrew of Crete, *Patrologia Graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 97 (Paris: 1857–66), 106; John of Scythopolis, *Scholia*, in *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 42, 36; see also Gabriele M. Roschini, *Lo Pseudo-Dionigi l'Areopagita e la morte di Maria SS* (Rome: Marianum, 1958).

150. István Perczel, "Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite and the Pseudo-Dormition of the Holy Virgin," *Le Muséon: Revue d'études orientales* 125 (2012): 55–97.

151. Dionysius, *Divine Names*, 3.2 (Luibhéid 70).

152. This interpretation is supported by the later Byzantine hymnographic tradition wherein Mary is hymned as being above the celestial hierarchy: "More honorable than the Cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim."

153. Arthur, *Pseudo-Dionysius as Polemicist,* 16, 157–58. "It is possible that Dionysius presented himself as a bishop in order to conceal his real identity. His attitude to the lack of humility of monks of his acquaintance suggests that he was higher in the hierarchy than they; that is, he was either a bishop or a priest."

154. Paul Rorem and John C. Lamoreaux. "John of Scythopolis on Apollinarian Christology and the Pseudo-Areopagite's True Identity." *Church History* 62, no. 4 (1993): 480–81. Cf. *Epistle X* (Luibhéid 288).

155. "In Sanctum Dionysium Areopagitam: 3 Oct. Canon I," *Analecta Hymnica Graeca*, ed. Canones Octobris, A. Debiasi Gonzato, and G. Schiro, Analecta hymnica graeca e codicibus eruta Italiae inferioris, vol. 2 (Rome: Istituto di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici, Università di Roma, 1976), 2, 5.

156. Stang, *Apophasis,* 41.

157. Ibid.

2. Maximus the Confessor and Christological Realization

1. Sebastian Brock, "An Early Syriac Life of Maximus the Confessor," *Analecta Bollandiana* 91 (1973): 299–346. For the Greek life, see R. Devreesse, "La vie de s. Maxime le Confesseur et ses recensions," *Analecta Bollandiana* 46 (1928). An especially helpful overview of the controversial context in which Maximus lived can be found in the introduction to *Maximus the Confessor and His Companions: Documents from Exile*, ed. and trans. Pauline Allen and Bronwen Neil (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). Primary sources cited from this source are hereafter referenced with the page number following Allen and Neil in parenthesis.

2. Andrew Louth, *Maximus the Confessor* (London: Routledge, 1996), 3–83. Louth offers an insightful narrative of Maximus's life, balancing the accounts from both the Greek and Syriac sources.

3. Taking the Palestinian provenance of Maximus seriously has born compelling historical contextualization, most recently in Phil Booth, *Crisis of Empire: Doctrine and Dissent at the End of Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).

4. Sophronius, *The Life of Mary of Egypt*, trans. Maria Kouli in Holy *Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints Lives in English Translation*, ed. Alice-Mary Talbot (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1996), 65–94; John Moschus, *The Spiritual Meadow*, trans. John Wortley (Piscataway, N.J.: Gorgias Press & Cistercian Publications, 1992); and Luis Joshua Salés, "Maximos of Constantinople: A Political-Circumstantial Assessment of the Greek & Syriac Lives of Maximus the Confessor" (paper presented at the Byzantine Studies Conference, New York City, October 24, 2015).

5. See, for example, St. Maximus the Confessor, *The Ascetic Life, The Four Centuries on Charity*, trans. Polycarp Sherwood (Mahwah, N.J.: Newman Press, 1955), 103–35. Texts from this edition are hereafter parenthetically cited with reference to the translator followed by the page number.

6. See, for example, Charles A. Frazee, "Late Roman and Byzantine Legislation on the Monastic Life from the Fourth to the Eighth Centuries," *Church History* 51, no. 3 (September 1, 1982): 263–79.

7. Louth, "Chapter 2: The Sources of Maximus' Theology," in *Maximus the Confessor*, 23.

8. See Dionysius's *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* in *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, ed. Colm Luibhéid and Paul Rorem (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 193–260. Hereafter, abbreviated citations for this source will be given with reference to Dionysius, the text, and the section followed by Luibhéid and the page numbers in parenthesis.

9. For a brief overview of the liturgical developments preceding and during Maximus's era, see Robert Taft, "Chapter 3: The Byzantine Rite Becomes Imperial," in *The Byzantine Rite: A Short History* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1992), 28–41; and Hugh Wybrew, "Chapter 5: The Liturgy in the Time of Maximus the Confessor," in *The Orthodox Liturgy* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990), 67–101.

10. Little is known of the liturgy Maximus describes precisely because Maximus's description is so often used as an example of seventh-century liturgy; see, for example, F. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896).

11. Paul Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to Their Influence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 30.

12. The proliferation of offices is indicated in Novella 6 of Justinian's Code, for which a translation is available in S. P. Scott, *Civil Law*, vol. 16 (Cincinnati: 1932).

13. Valerie Karras, "Female Deacons in the Byzantine Church," *Church History* 73, no. 2 (2004): 272–316; Vasiliki Limberas, *Divine Heiress: The Virgin Mary and the Creation of Christian Constantinople* (London: Routledge, 1994); and Allen and Neil, *Maximus the Confessor and His Companions*, 114–17. Allen and Neil's volume shows clearly that during his trial Maximus publicly condemned all who refused to call Mary *Theotokos*, despite him initially being charged with anti-Marian sentiment.

14. For an overview of the relationship between Maximus and Dionysius, see Andrew Louth, "St. Denys the Areopagite and St. Maximus the Confessor: A Question of Influence," *Studia Patristica* 27 (1993): 166–74.

15. Charles Stang, *Apophasis and Pseudonymity in Dionysius the Areopagite: "No longer I"* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 12–21. Stang provides one of the more recent summaries of Dionysius's controversial historical situation.

16. Maximus, introduction to *The Church's Mystagogy*, in *Maximus Confessor: Selected Writings*, trans. George Berthold (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 184 (hereafter, this collection of translated texts is referred to by the translator followed by the page number); Charles Stang, "The Beginning and End of All Hierarchy," in *The Open Body: Essays in Anglican Ecclesiology*, ed. Zachary Guiliano and Charles Stang (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 117. Maximus explains that

> since the symbols of the sacred celebration of the holy synaxis have also been considered by the most holy and truly divine interpreter Dionysius the Areopagite in a manner which is worthy of his great mind in his treatise *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, it should be known that this present work will not repeat these same things nor will it proceed in the same manner. . . . Instead, my subject will be those things which God in his goodness wanted him to leave for others for the interpretation and exercise of the habit of these things in accordance with their desire for divine things.

Stang also claims that

> Maximus offers three contributions and correctives to the Dionysian theory of hierarchy: First, he complicates the Dionysian fixation on this ecclesiastical hierarchy, our own embodied earthly church. Second, through the different orders "mystically imprinted" on each other, he offers space in which to critique our ecclesiastical hierarchy. Third, and most importantly, I suggest that Maximus not only discerns the crucial tension in the Dionysian theory of hierarchy between a scale of relative likeness to God and an unknown God who is beyond any and all simile, but wishes to make explicit

the implications of this tension. In other words, I suspect that Maximus makes manifest what remains latent in Dionysius's theory, namely that the *telos* of hierarchy annuls its *arche* or governing principle!

17. Some discussion of the "insufficiency" of Dionysius's Christology and John Meyendorff's claim that Maximus offers to it a "christological corrective" as well as an example of reading Dionysius as having sufficient Christology is given in Alexander Golitzin, "Dionysius Areopagites in the Works of Saint Gregory Palamas: On the Question of a 'Christological Corrective' and Related Matters," in *The Theophaneia School: Jewish Roots of Eastern Christian Mysticism*, ed. B. Lourié and A. Orlov (St. Petersburg: Vizantinorossika, 2007), 83–105.

18. A summary of Maximus's appropriation of Dionysius can be found in Andrew Louth, "Reception of Dionysius in the Byzantine World: Maximus to Palamas," *Modern Theology* 24, no. 4 (2008): 590–94.

19. See Maximus, *Ambiguum 7*, I and III, in *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*, trans. Paul Blowers and Robert Wilken (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 45, 61. Hereafter, this edition is referred to by citing the translators.

20. Blowers and Wilken, introduction to *Cosmic Mystery*, 16–21. Two of the most noteworthy studies on these two themes is Lars Thunberg, *Microcosm and Mediator: The Theological Anthropology of Maximus the Confessor*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Open Court, 1995); and Melchisedec Törönen, *Union and Distinction in the Thought of St. Maximus the Confessor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

21. Louth, introduction to *Maximus the Confessor*, 33. In his insightful introduction, Louth notes regarding Maximus's Christocentricism that "before his arrival in Africa, around 630, few of his writings raise questions of dogmatic or philosophical theology, though if it is indeed the case, as has been conjectured, that on his way from Asia Minor to Africa he engaged in disputation with Severan Monophysites in Crete, it would seem that he already had a reputation as a defender of Orthodoxy."

22. Jaroslav Pelikan, introduction to *Maximus Confessor* (Berthold 3). Numerous studies have noted the Christocentric nature of Maximus's use of philosophical concepts; see, for example, Torstein Tollefsen, *The Christocentric Cosmology of St. Maximus the Confessor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). Pelikan offers a slightly different conclusion, that one can infer a "broad humanistic education" given to Maximus "from the depth and breadth of his literary acquaintance not only with the Bible and with the fathers and masters of Christian spirituality such as Origen and the fourth-century Cappadocians (Gregory Nazianzus, Basil of Caesarea, and Gregory of Nyssa), but with the major figures of pre-Christian philosophy, including Aristotle and the Neoplatonists Iamblichus and Proclus."

23. Maximus, *Mystagogy* (Berthold 208).

24. For example, the *Dispute at Bizya*, wherein Maximus defends the calling of a council without the order of the emperor (Allen and Neil, 75–119).

25. In contrast to the interpretation given by Jaroslav Pelikan in his introduction to *Maximus Confessor: Selected Writings*, 3; Andrew Louth counters that Maximus was not in fact at any time an abbot of one of his monasteries ("Chapter 3: Maximus' Spiritual Theology," in *Maximus the Confessor*, 33).

26. See, for example, in modern usage: "August 13," in *The Menaion*, vol. 12, trans. Holy Transfiguration Monastery (Boston: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 2005).

27. Maximus, introduction to *Mystagogy*; *Mystagogy*, XXIV (Berthold 184, 198).

28. For an insightful study of "hierarchy" (not named as such) in biblical and early patristic sources, see Yordan Kalev Zhekov, *The Rise of Hierarchical Leadership* (Osijek, Croatia: Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2005).

29. Andrew Louth, "The Ecclesiology of Saint Maximos the Confessor," *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 4, no. 2 (2004): 113. Louth explains that for Maximus,

> hierarchy does mean order but, like the structure of the church building as Maximos explains it, it is an order drawing and being drawn up to union with God, and more than that it is a matter of knowledge and activity. It is in this sense that the Church, for Maximos, is hierarchical; there is order and structure, manifest not least in the ranks of the ministers, that enables the church as a community to be ordered towards God, to be an instrument of God's outreach towards those who do not know him or who misunderstand him, to be a place where God's activity is encountered and knowledge of God is shared.

30. Maximus, *Four Centuries on Charity*, II.54 and IV.50 (Sherwood, 164, 199).

31. Ibid., *The Ascetic Life*, XXXVI (Sherwood 125) and *Four Centuries on Charity*, IV.50 (Sherwood 199).

32. Ibid., *Four Centuries on Charity*, IV.50 (Sherwood 199).

33. Tollefsen, *Christocentric Cosmology*, 216, explains that this activity is "really one, simple divine activity" and that "the activity is not only present to the whole of creatures, but also to each individual being contained in the whole." Consequently, as the hierarchy is an image of God, then it is fulfilled through divine activity that is eternal.

34. Paul Blowers, "Maximus the Confessor, Gregory of Nyssa, and the Concept of 'Perpetual Progress,'" *Vigiliae Christianae* 46, no. 2 (1992): 151–71; here, 164.

35. Maximus, *Mystagogy*, XX (Berthold 203).

36. Nikolaos Loukovidos, *A Eucharistic Ontology: Maximus the Confessor's Eschatological Ontology of Being as Dialogical Reciprocity*, trans. Elizabeth Theokritoff (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2010), 41–42;

Tollefsen, *Christocentric Cosmology*, 211. Loukovidos emphasizes that in the liturgical context, the priesthood realizes this potential not necessarily at the personal level, but as an "instrument" of the sacraments. Tollefsen offers a more nuanced discussion of the realization of the relationship between the logos and the logoi in Maximus as a model of divine participation.

37. Maximus, *Four Centuries on Charity*, II.21 (Sherwood 156).

38. Tollefsen, *Christocentric Cosmology,* 200.

39. See Maximus, *Opuscule 11*, translated and cited in Louth, "Ecclesiology," 116.

40. Tollefsen*, Christocentric Cosmology.* 216. Tollefsen explains this concept of hierarchy in Maximus, saying "the activities of God are really one, simple divine activity. It is as received by creatures that the activity is diversified—i.e., in its effects. By actualizing this and that in the receivers or the participants we come to distinguish hierarchically between aspects of the activity."

41. Maximus, *Ambiguum 7* in *On the Cosmic Mystery* (Blowers and Wilken 57).

42. Ibid., II (Blowers and Wilken 57).

43. Ibid. See also Maximus, *Two Hundred Chapters on Theology*, 2.1, trans. Luis Joshua Salés (Yonkers, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2015), 105.

44. See, for example, Paul Blowers, "The Logology of Maximus the Confessor in His Criticism of Origenism," in *Origeniana Quinta,* ed. Robert. J. Daley (Louvain, Netherlands: Peeters, 1993); Irenee-Henri Dalmai, "La théorie des 'logoi' des créatures chez S. Maxime le Confesseur," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 36 (1952): 244–49; and Joost van Rossum, "The λόγοι of Creation and the Divine 'Energies' in Maximus the Confessor and Gregory Palamas," *Studia Patristica* 27 (1993): 213–17.

45. Andrew Cooper, "St. Maximus the Confessor on Priesthood, Hierarchy, and Rome," *Pro Ecclesia* 10 (2001): 346–67; here, 352, citing Maximus's *Epistle XXX* in *Patrologia Graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 91 (Paris: 1857–66), 624B.

46. Loukovidos, *Eucharistic Ontology*, 41.

47. Maximus, *Two Hundred Chapters on Theology*, 1.10 (Salés 130).

48. Phil Booth, "On the *Life of the Virgin* Attributed to Maximus Confessor," *Journal of Theological Studies* 66, no. 1 (2015): 149–203.

49. See Stephen Shoemaker's introduction to Maximus the Confessor, *The Life of the Virgin*, trans. Stephen Shoemaker (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 9–12. *The Life of the Virgin* is hereafter cited with reference to this edition parenthetically by the translator followed by the page number.

50. An insightful reflection on the implications of Maximus's *Life of the Virgin* is given by Sally Cunneen, "Maximus's Mary: A Minister, Not Just an Icon," *Commonweal* 136, no. 21 (2009): 15–19.

51. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy,* I.3 (Luibhéid 197).

52. Maximus, *Life of the Virgin*, VII.94 (Shoemaker 121); Ibid., 95 (Shoemaker 123).

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid., VII.97 (Shoemaker 124).

55. Ninth Ode of the *Akathist Canon*, this develops into the *Megalynarion*: "It is truly meet," and is also iconographically and festally commemorated. See the brief summary in Alfredo Triadigo, *Icons and Saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2006), 191–93.

56. Shoemaker, introduction to Maximus, *Life of the Virgin*, 14. Shoemaker notes that the life identifies Dionysius specifically as a source for its content, ranking him among the "holy and deeply devout fathers."

57. Maximus, *Difficulty 41* (Louth, 157). Louth titles his translation of Maximus's text with the English "Difficulty" in lieu of "Ambiguum" as it is cited in other translated editions such as Blowers and Wilken, and Maximos the Confessor, *On Difficulties in the Church Fathers: The Ambigua*, vol. 2, trans. Nicholas Constas (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2014), 102–21.

58. Doru Costache, "Living above Gender: Insights from Saint Maximus the Confessor," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 21 (2013): 261–90. Costache agrees that Maximus does not reject gender difference outright, but rather reconfigures it as a means of salvation.

59. Maximus, *Difficulty 41* (Louth 157).

60. Stang, "Beginning and End," 121.

61. Tollefsen, *Christocentric Cosmology*, 401.

62. Andrew Cooper, *The Body in Maximus the Confessor: Holy Flesh, Wholly Deified* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 224. Cooper explains: "What is achieved through baptism is not the elimination of a person's gender or sexual, bodily, identity, but the dissolution of his or her *genesis* 'from corruption, to incorruption.'"

63. Blowers, "Maximus," 164. Blowers aptly notes that "Maximus consistently denies any mystical absorption such that would violate the 'λόγος φύσεως' of a human being." For a more in-depth study of this dynamic, see Törönen, *Union and Distinction*.

64. Maximus, *Four Centuries on Charity*, I.71 (Sherwood 146).

65. Ibid. (Sherwood 146–47).

66. Maximus, *Difficulty 41* (Louth 157).

67. The importance of this union without confusion is explained in relation to the divine nature in Tollefsen, *Christocentric Cosmology*, 215–16. Edward Siecienski, "The Authenticity of Maximus the Confessor's Letter to Marinus: The Argument from Theological Consistency," *Vigiliae Christianae* 61, no. 2 (2007): 189–227; here, 202. Siecienski also notes that Maximus's emphasis on clarity in theological languages led him to defend the filioque because it clarifies "Trinitarian ordering . . . and hypostatic origination."

68. Maximus, *Ascetic Life*, 3–4 (Sherwood 104–5).

69. Maximus, *Mystagogy*, I (Berthold 187–88).

70. Cooper, "St. Maximus," 348–9.

71. Maximus, *Mystagogy*, I (Berthold 187).

72. Ibid. (Berthold 187–88).

73. Ibid. (Berthold 186).

74. For an excellent discussion of how Maximus's christological unity serves as a model for divinization, see Tollefsen, *Christocentric*, 205–13.

75. Maximus, *Mystagogy,* XXIV (Berthold 208).

76. Ibid.

77. For an unsurpassed study of Byzantine church architecture inclusive of Maximus's lifetime and geographic diversity, see Cyril Mango, *Byzantine Architecture* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. Publishers, 1975).

78. The classic volume on Maximus's theology that centers on the micro/macrocosmic relationship in Maximus's writings is Lars Thunberg, *Microcosm and Mediator: The Theological Anthropology of Saint Maximus the Confessor* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985).

79. Maximus, *Mystagogy*, XX (Berthold 203).

80. Ibid., *Ad Thalassium* 60 (Blowers and Wilken 123–29).

81. Ibid., *Mystagogy*, XX (Berthold 203).

82. Ibid., XXI (Berthold 203).

83. Cooper, "St. Maximus," 353. It might be, as Cooper claims, that "the actual person of the priest and his mediatorial function are in no way viewed as separate," so that the person and the fulfillment of the rank through divine power need greater clarification.

84. Derek Krueger makes a similar theoretical move in regard to scripture being learned primarily through liturgy in his book *Liturgical Subjects: Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative, and the Formation of the Self in Byzantium* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).

85. Ibid; For an excellent study on divinization in Maximus the Confessor, see Jean-Claude Larchet, *La divinisation de l'homme selon saint Maxime le Confesseur* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1996).

86. Maximus, *Mystagogy*, VIII (Berthold 198).

87. See, for example, the distinction between "sign" and "symbol" in Paul Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith* (New York: Perennial Classics Harper Collins, 2001), 47–84.

88. This type of iconographic interpretation of participation is later defended with appeals to Dionysius by John of Damascus in *Three Treatises on The Divine Images,* trans. Andrew Louth (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 113.

89. Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy: The Universe According to Maximus the Confessor*, trans. Brian Daley (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988), 322. Von Balthasar gives an excellent explanation on this point from a christological

perspective, saying, "The liturgy is . . . a way of drawing the entire world into the hypostatic union, because both world and liturgy share a Christological foundation," so that the world participates via the liturgy in divinity without confusion or annihilation.

90. Maximus, *Mystagogy*, XIII (Berthold 200).

91. Loukovidos, *Eucharistic Ontology*, 41.

92. Peter Berger, *Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967), 40.

93. Maximus, *Mystagogy*, XIV (Berthold 200).

94. 2 Cor. 4:4.

95. V. M. Zhivov, "The Mystagogy of Maximus the Confessor and the Development of the Byzantine Theory of the Image," trans. Ann Shukman, *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 31, no. 4 (1987): 353–54. Zhivov notes for Maximus that "any material object and any historical event are connected with noetic essences merely by convention."

96. Maximus, *Trial of Maximus*, VII–X, XIII, in *Maximus Confessor* (Berthold 22–23, 26); Louth, "Ecclesiology of Saint Maximos," 117; Cooper, "St. Maximus," 365. The question of Maximus's support of Roman primacy is handled variously by different scholars. Louth for example explains that the "Church is founded on the confession of Christ" given by Peter, which is then transferrable wherever that confession may be. Cooper on the other hand explains that for Maximus, Peter is "no less yet no more than the archetypal and paradigmatic confessor of the true faith in Christ."

97. Maximus, *Opuscule 11*, cited and commented on in Louth, "Ecclesiology," 116. Louth summarizes that "the institutional structures of the Church, expressed in the priesthood and synodical convocations, were important for Maximos."

98. Especially those found in *Maximus the Confessor and His Companions*, ed. Allen and Neil.

99. Cooper, "St. Maximus," 355. Cooper explains: "Surely we are justified in affirming that Maximus explicitly locates the significance of priesthood at the altar, in the elevation, with the proclamation 'Τὰ Ἅγια τοῖς ἁγίοις!' because there above all is the priest most visibly and definitively what he is appointed to be: the mediating servant by which worthy individuals attain a holy communion. There he most closely resembles Christ the mediator between God and man."

100. Dionysius, *Epistle VIII* (Luibhéid 208). For an excellent study on the relationship between ecclesiastical and imperial authority, see Gilbert Dagron, *Emperor and Priest: The Imperial Office in Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

101. Maximus, *Trial of Maximus*, IV, V (Berthold 19, 21).

102. Ibid., IV (Berthold 19).

103. Ibid., V (Berthold 21).

104. Maximus, *Ambiguum 5* (Louth 177–79).
105. Maximus, *Trial of Maximus*, IV (Berthold 19).
106. *Dispute at Bizya* (Allen and Neil 105).
107. Ibid., 111.
108. Maximus, *Ascetic Life*, 45, 42 (Sherwood, 135, 133).
109. Ibid., 36 (Sherwood 125).
110. *Dispute at Bizya* (Allen and Neil 85).
111. Maximus, *Four Hundred Chapters on Charity*, I.59 (Sherwood 41).
112. Maximus, introduction to *Mystagogy* (Berthold 184).
113. Ibid.
114. Ibid., conclusion to *Mystagogy* (Berthold 213).

3. Niketas Stethatos's Hierarchic Re-Imaging

1. Niketas Stethatos, *Opuscules et lettres*, ed. J. Darrouzés, *Sources Chrétiennes* 81 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1961), 341–45. Hereafter this edition will be cited as "*SC* 81" followed by the page number. All translations from this edition are my own.

2. An introduction to the religious life of the eleventh-century can be found in Gerhard Podskalsky, "Religion und Religiöses Leben im Byzanz des 11 Jahrhunderts," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 57, no. 2 (1991): 371–97.

3. For an overview of the ecclesiastical situation to this time period, see John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1974), and Andrew Louth, *Greek East and Latin West: The Church AD 680–1071* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2007). Stethatos's own extant writings reflect engagement with all of these issues, and can be found edited in *SC* 81; *Patrologia Graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 120 (Paris: 1857–66), 307–8 and 1010–22 (hereafter abbreviated as *PG*); and Stethatos, *Centuries of Practical and Gnostic Chapters*, ed. G. Palmer, P. Sherrard, and K. Ware (London: Faber and Faber, 1995). Hereafter, this edition is cited by parenthetical reference to the editors followed by the page number. Stethatos's polemical writings edited by Migne are a series of heated exchanges focusing on the issue of azymes with Cardinal Humbert.

4. Irenee Hausherr and Gabriel Horn, eds., *Un grand mystique byzantine: Vie de Symeon le Nouveau Théologien* [949–1022] (Roma: Pontifical Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1928); Martin Hinterberger, "Niketas Stethatos der 'Beherzte'?" *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 103, no. 1 (2010): I. Abteilung. Hausherr suggests that Stethatos received this title due to his staunch opposition to Emperor Constantine IX regarding his marital morality. Hinterberger on the other hand suggests that "Stethatos" is a physically descriptive family surname and does not carry a character inference.

5. See Niketas Stethatos, *The Life of Saint Symeon the New Theologian*, trans. Richard P. H. Greenfield (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013), 311–13. Hereafter, this translation is cited parenthetically with reference to the translator.

6. See *PG* 120: 1009–22 and *SC* 81: 412–33.

7. Frederick Lauritzen, "An Ironic Portrait of a Social Monk: Christopher of Mytilene and Niketas Stethatos," *Byzantinoslavica* 65 (2007): 201–10. Lauritzen argues quite compellingly that Stethatos is the subject of Christopher of Mytilene's *Poem 27* about Niketas of Synada, which would situate him in a very learned and influential social sphere. The dedications and inscriptions in Stethatos's own letters and writings further support his characterization as a socially prominent intellectual monastic leader.

8. Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 186n37.

9. For an overview of the unedited *hypotyposis*, see Dirk Krausmüller, "Private vs. Communal: Niketas Stethatos's Hypotyposis for Studios, and Patterns of Worship in the Eleventh-Century Byzantine Monasteries," in *Work and Worship at the Theotokos Evergetis 1050–1200* (Belfast: Belfast Byzantine Enterprises, 1997), 309–28.

10. Symeon, *The Epistles of St. Symeon the New Theologian*, ed. H. J. M. Turner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 12. Turner explains in the introduction that "we may be inclined to suppose that Nicetas, in his role as editor/publisher, was responsible for the text of the four 'letters' as we now have them, but there remain questions with regard to *Ep. I*, as a study of the manuscripts shows. If Nicetas did indeed subject the Epistles to a fair amount of editing before he put them into circulation, this is compatible with what he says about himself."

11. Alexander Golitzin, "Hierarchy Versus Anarchy? Dionysius Areopagita, Symeon the New Theologian, Nicetas Stethatos, and Their Common Roots in Ascetical Tradition," *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 38 (1994): 131–79; here, 147; Andrew Louth, "The Reception of Dionysius in the Byzantine World: Maximus to Palamas," *Modern Theology* 24, no. 4 (2008): 594. Golitzin suggests that Niketas may have added some content to Symeon's theology, but also that the disciple ultimately remains a faithful adherent of his mentor. In the case of hierarchy, Golitzin observes: "There is therefore nothing in Nicetas' basic picture of hierarchy that cannot be found in Symeon. While the disciple obviously adds some detail to the master's images, the fundamental presupposition, the saint as microcosm in whom the heavenly and earthly liturgies are present and mirrored, is identical." Louth claims that the relationship is more complex, saying that "despite his [Niketas's] connection with Symeon the New Theologian, the difference

between them are considerable and nowhere more so than in the question of their reception of Dionysius."

12. Matthew Pereira, "Beholding Beauty in Nicetas Stethatos' Contemplation of Paradise," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 63, no. 3–4 (2012): 51–61; Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 3.6, referenced from the translated edition, *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, ed. Colm Luibhéid and Paul Rorem (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 207. Hereafter, abbreviated citations will be given with reference to Dionysius, the text, and the section followed by Luibhéid and the page numbers in this edition in parenthesis. Pereira depicts Niketas's aesthetic vision of the contemplation of the Trinity as the contemplation of beauty. Dionysius explains that hierarchic rites are the "precise images" of the divine and celestial realities.

13. Nadezda Mankovskaya, "Aesthetics from Philo to Florensky and Beyond," *Russian Studies in Philosophy* 51, no. 1 (2012): 14. Mankovskaya points out that the "icon was conceptualized as a representation of the ideal visible image (the 'inner eidos,' to use Plotinus's terminology) of the archetype" so that a person possessing the divine likeness would be iconographic.

14. Symeon, *Epistle I* (Turner 53–57). Symeon explains that one's authenticity as a spiritual father and the ability to provide confession is dependent on one's possession of the divine image. Stethatos emphasizes the appropriate reverence due one's spiritual father in his *hypotyposis*; see Krausmüller, "Private vs. Communal," 309–28.

15. Mankovskaya, "Aesthetics from Philo to Florensky and Beyond," 15. Mankovskaya suggests that the Byzantine ascetic aesthetics result in an idealization of the negation of decoration and adornment; however, she cites Symeon the New Theologian as a representative of this ideal even though Symeon arguably emphasizes external displays and reflection of divinity more than most previous Byzantine authors.

16. H. J. M. Turner, *St. Symeon the New Theologian: The New Theologian and Spiritual Fatherhood* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1990).

17. See especially, John of Climacus, "To the Shepherd," in *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, trans. Holy Transfiguration Monastery (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 1991), 231–50. Symeon the New Theologian, *The Discourses*, trans. C. J. deCatanzaro (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1980), 300–303.

18. Symeon, *Epistle I* (Turner 53–57).

19. Ibid., *Hymn 58* in Symeon, *Divine Eros: Hymns of Saint Symeon the New Theologian*, ed. Daniel Griggs (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2010), 398–410. This characterization of Symeon is explained in Joost van Rossum, "Priesthood and Confession in St. Symeon the New Theologian," St. *Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 20 (1976): 220–28.

20. Jean Goulliard, "Constantin Chrysomallos sous le masque de Symeon le Nouveau Théologien," *Travaux et Mémoires* 5 (1973): 313–28.

21. This depiction is notably found in Joost van Rossum, "Reflections on Byzantine Ecclesiology: Nicetas Stethatos; 'On the Hierarchy'" *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 25 (1981): 75–83; Stethatos, *Life of Symeon the New Theologian* (Greenfield 65).

22. Symeon, *Hymn* 58 in Symeon, *Divine Eros*. The *Hymns* were composed at the end of his life after his own rebuke by episcopal authorities and expulsion from Constantinople, so he is distanced and somewhat also externally offering a critique of hierarchical activity and authority.

23. Egon Wellesz, *A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962).

24. Cyril Mango, *Byzantine Architecture* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. 1976), 194–252; Sharon E. J. Gerstel, ed., *Thresholds of the Sacred: Architectural, Art Historical, Liturgical, and Theological Perspectives on Religious Screens, East and West* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2007).

25. Germanus, *On the Divine Liturgy*, trans. Paul Meyendorff (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984), 57.

26. Stethatos, *Contra Latinos* (*PG* 120: 1009–22). An overview of this controversy is found in Andrew Louth, *Greek East and Latin West: The Church, AD 681–1071* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2007), 304–18; John Erickson, "Leavened and Unleavened Bread: Some Theological Implications of the Schism of 1054" in *The Challenge of Our Past,* ed. John Erickson (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1991), 133–55.

27. See G. Majeska, "The Emperor in His Church: Imperial Ritual in the Church of St. Sophia," in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. H. Maguire (Cambridge, Mass., 1997).

28. Ibid; Louth, "Reception of Dionysius," 594. Louth suggests that Stethatos "keeps the Dionysian definition of hierarchy, but its meaning has been transformed into the provision of a sacramental way of deification, administered by the clergy." Louth further comments how "odd" it is that Stethatos cites Dionysius so often and yet the "Dionysian cosmic vision dissolves into an all-too-comfortable clerical ecclesiasticism" in Stethatos's construction of hierarchy. Louth's characterization of Stethatos in this way, however, does not mention Stethatos's admission of spiritually experienced unordained individuals to the hierarchic ranks in *On Hierarchy*, 5.40 (*SC* 81, 345).

29. Stethatos, *On Hierarchy*, 5 (*SC* 81, 307).

30. Ibid., 1–5 (*SC* 81, 300–7).

31. Ibid. (*SC* 81, 292). This was the headmaster position of the patriarchal university in Constantinople. See Louis Brehier, *Le monde byzantine*, *II: La civilisation byzantine* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1950), 493.

32. The brief epistolary exchange between Stethatos and the deacon Niketas are included in *SC* 81, 292–97.

33. Ibid. (*SC* 81, 364).

34. Charles Stang, "Dionysius, Paul, and the Significance of the Pseudonym," *Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite*, ed. Sarah Coakley and Charles Stang (Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 541–56. Stang offers an interpretation of the pseudonym as ascetic practice that suggests a level of appreciation for pseudonymous writing in antiquity as a spiritual practice.

35. See for example John of Damascus's substantial use of the Areopagite in *Three Treatises on The Divine Images,* trans. Andrew Louth (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003).

36. Stethatos, *On Hierarchy*, 2–4 (*SC* 81, 302–5).

37. Ibid., 4 (*SC* 81, 304).

38. Ibid., 4 (*SC* 81, 304).

39. Ibid., 1–2 (*SC* 81, 300–302).

40. Stethatos, *On Hierarchy*, 2 (*SC* 81, 302).

41. Mankovskaya, "Aesthetics from Philo to Florensky," 16 shows that a "symbol (or a liturgical image, *typos*) is understood by the Church Fathers of the later period (and especially consistently by Symeon, Archbishop of Thessaloniki, fifteenth century) as a 'real' (in the sense of 'sacred') carrier of divine energy, or of the spiritual power of the prototype. It is understood not only as a semiotic unit but also as a sacred-ontological phenomenon that *really* 'manifests' the spiritual archetype to the liturgy participants."

42. Krausmüller, "Private vs. Communal," 324. Krausmüller notes that the text of Niketas's "Concise Outline of the Liturgy of the Hours for Day and Night" is currently unpublished and preserved only in Oxon. Bodl. Clarke, 2, s13, fol. 193v–204v (309). Krausmüller concludes in his overview to this unpublished manuscript that "in introducing the Mesoria he (Stethatos) can be classed with the liturgical innovators whereas he resists the move toward communal worship in order to preserve a private environment where his ideal the 'inspired perfect' could develop" (328).

43. Golitzin, "Hierarchy Versus Anarchy," 131–79; here, 144.

44. Stethatos, *On Paradise*, 6 (*SC* 81, 160).

45. Symeon, *Discourse IV* (deCatanzaro 70–90); Hannah Hunt, *Joy Bearing Grief: Tears of Contrition in the Writings of the Early Syrian and Byzantine Fathers* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2004).

46. Stethatos, *On the Limits of Life,* 17 (*SC* 81, 383).

47. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy,* 3.4 (Luibhéid 213). Dionysius explains that psalmody enables "everyone who participates in a godly spirit always to receive and to pass on the sacrament of the hierarchy."

48. Stethatos, *On Hierarchy*, 3 (*SC* 81, 318–30).

49. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 2.7 (Luibhéid 203). One example of Dionysius avoiding the words of the sacred rites is referring to "Alleluia" as "that sacred song which God inspired in the prophets."

50. Stethatos, *On Hierarchy*, 7 (*SC* 81, 355–61).

51. Rosemary Dubowchik, "Musical Life of the Monasteries of the Byzantine Empire," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 56 (2002): 277–96. Dubowchik explains that "the act of singing became a spiritual path, a form of nourishment for the soul and enlightenment for the mind," in Byzantine monastic practice—an observation that seems reflected in Niketas' formulation here.

52. Wellesz, *A History,* 104.

53. Richard Barrett, "Let Us Put Away All Earthly Cares: Mysticism and the *Cherubikon* in the Byzantine Rite of Late Antiquity," *Studia Patristica* LXIV (2013): 111–24. The *Cherubikon* was likely "understood in Late Antiquity as describing the liturgical action as a mystical experience," which would be in contrast to mere intellectual contemplation.

54. Wellesz, *A History,* 166.

55. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 6 (Luibhéid 243). Cf. Stethatos, *On Hierarchy*, 3.22 (*SC* 81, 326–27).

56. Louth, "Reception of Dionysius," 594. Louth explains that Stethatos brings Dionysius's triads "into line with ecclesiastical usage" so that "hierarchy becomes less the way in which the divine theophany reaches out into multiplicity to draw the whole created order into union with God, and more a system of subordinate authority that ministers to those outside the hierarchy"—namely, the laity.

57. Stethatos*, On Hierarchy,* 4 (*SC* 81, 330–35).

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid.

60. Louth, "Reception of Dionysius," 594.

61. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 5.3 (Luibhéid 244–45). Golitzin, *Mystagogy,* 329–35; Sebastian Brock, introduction to *Hymns on Paradise* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990), 31–3. Golitzin names specifically the Syrian "singles" as a source for Dionysius, while Brock explains the christological connection between the name for Syrian ascetics and Christ himself, "in the Syriac New Testament the term *monogenes* 'only-begotten' is regularly translated as *ihida* or *ihidaya* so that among the various associations behind the Syriac term ihidaya used of those living an ascetic life, that a follower of Christ the *ihidaya* par excellence will be very prominent."

62. Angela Constantinides Hero and John Philip Thomas, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*. vol. 1 (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2000), 178. These documents attest that the association between monks and angels is also visible in the explanations that emerge by the eleventh-century for the components of the monastic habit.

63. Symeon, *Epistle I* (Turner 55).

64. Stethatos, *On Hierarchy*, 22 (*SC* 81, 326).

65. Stethatos, *On the Customs of the Studites* (*SC* 81, 486–507).

66. Mary Cunningham, "Chapter III.9.3: Clergy, Monks, and Laity," in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys, John Haldon, and Robin Cormack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 527–37.

67. Warren Woodfin, *The Embodied Icon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 188; Robert Taft, "Byzantine Communion Spoons," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 50 (1996): 224–31.

68. Tom Driver, *Liberating Rites: Understanding the Transformative Power of Ritual* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997), 25.

69. Ibid., 26. Driver suggests "ritualizations can be used to store and transmit information across time and across generations."

70. Stethatos, *On Hierarchy*, 2 (*SC* 81, 308–18).

71. Leslie Brubaker, "Perception and Conception: Art, Theory and Culture in Ninth-Century Byzantium," *Word and Image: A Journal of Verbal/Visual Enquiry* 5, no. 1 (1989): 25.

72. Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, trans. by Gino Robinson (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 113–15.

73. Stethatos, *On the Limits of Life*, 5.34 (*SC* 81, 337).

74. See, Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 1.1.2 (Luibhéid 197). Dionysius explains "We see our human hierarchy . . . as our nature allows, pluralized in a great variety of perceptible symbols lifting us upward hierarchically until we are brought as far as we can be into the unity of divinization. The heavenly beings, because of their intelligence, have their own permitted conceptions of God. For us, on the other hand, it is by way of the perceptible images that we are uplifted as far as we can be to the contemplation of what is divine. Actually, it is the same one whom all one-like beings desire, but they do not participate in the same way in this one and the same being. Rather, the share of the divine is apportioned to each in accordance with merit."

75. Robert Taft, *The Byzantine Rite: A Short History* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1992), 67–77.

76. Brubaker, "Perception and Conception," 23.

77. Stethatos, *On the Customs of the Studites* (*SC* 81, 486–507).

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid., 488; Dionysius, *Celestial Hierarchy*, 15.4 (Luibhéid 186).

80. Stethatos, *On the Customs of the Studites*, 3 (*SC* 81, 491). A similar type of interpretation of the things and clothes of the hierarchical ranks is found in Germanus, *On the Divine Liturgy*.

81. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 1.1.3 (Luibhéid 197). Dionysius claims, "We have a venerable tradition which asserts that every hierarchy is the complete expression of the sacred elements comprised within it." For a rich discussion on vestments and the development of their theological significance, see Woodfin, *Embodied Icon*.

82. Stethatos, *On the Customs of the Studites* 3–4 (*SC* 81, 491–92).

83. Peter Berger, *Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967), 31.

84. Stethatos, *On Hierarchy*, 5.36 (*SC* 81, 338).

85. Ibid.

86. Ibid., 5.39 (*SC* 81, 342).

87. Paul Bradshaw, *Ordination Rites of East and West* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1990), 133–39.

88. Stethatos, *On Hierarchy*, 5.39 (*SC* 81, 342).

89. Bradshaw, *Ordination Rites*, 133–9.

90. Stethatos, *On Hierarchy*, 5.34 (*SC* 81, 337).

91. Ibid. 5.33 (*SC* 81, 335).

92. Ibid., 5.40 (*SC* 81, 344).

93. Golitzin, "Hierarchy Versus Anarchy," 148; Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy,* 1.3 (Luibhéid 197). Golitzin offers explanation in his own footnote of the uniqueness of his translation including "his own" before hierarchy. He explains this is a reference to the interior microcosmic reality of the hierarchy that corresponds to the macrocosmic heavenly reality. Golitzin also observes the connection between Dionysius and Niketas saying "Nicetas' and Symeon's picture of the holy man as the 'true bishop,' the very place of the Kingdom of God and spiritual paradise, is surely then indebted in good part to Dionysius's description of hierarch as 'the inspired and divine man learned in all sacred knowledge, in whom his own hierarchy is both perfected and made known."

94. That Dionysius takes for granted that every bishop has divine knowledge is pointed out in van Rossum, "Reflections on Byzantine Ecclesiology," 75–83.

95. Stethatos *On Hierarchy,* 5.40 (*SC* 81, 345).

96. Ibid., 5.36 (*SC* 81, 339).

97. Van Rossum, "Reflections on Byzantine Ecclesiology," 78–9, citing Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 28, and Symeon, *Hymn XIX*. Van Rossum, observes:

> We may wonder if these passages have been inspired by Pseudo-Dionysius, whom he quotes at length in this treatise, or by St. Symeon. According to both the priesthood is a "personal state of man and not a function in the community." As for this problem we have to make the following remark. The author of the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* does not say that every spiritual man is a bishop, but only the reverse: he seems to take for granted that every bishop is a spiritual man . . . even if St. Symeon does not simply say that every "mystic" is called to be a priest. The office of the priesthood is, according to him, based on a special vocation.

98. Stethatos *On Hierarchy*, 5.37 (*SC* 81, 341).

99. Ibid., 5.38 (*SC* 81, 341).

100. Ibid., 5.33 (*SC* 81, 335).

101. Van Rossum, "Reflections on Byzantine Ecclesiology," 80.

102. Brubaker, "Perception and Conception," 42.

103. Stethatos, *Life of Symeon*, 30 (Greenfield 43).

104. Symeon, *Epistle III* (Turner 121).

105. Jeffrey Anderson, "On the Nature of the Theodore Psalter," *The Art Bulletin* 70, no. 4 (1998): 558–59.

106. Stethatos, *Centuries of Practical and Gnostic Chapters* (Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware 98).

107. A study of the Holy Spirit in Niketas can be found in L. H. Grondijs, "Der Heilige Geist in den Schriften des Niketas Stethatos," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 51 (1958): 329–54.

108. Stethatos, *Life of Symeon*, 3.30 (Greenfield 65).

109. Derek Krueger, "The Unbounded Body in the Age of Liturgical Reproduction," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 17, no. 2 (2009): 267–79.

110. Stethatos, *On the Canons*, 6 (*SC* 81, 471).

111. Symeon, *Epistle I* (Turner 45).

112. Stethatos, *On the Canons*, 6 (*SC* 81, 471). Niketas remarks that the heretical Messalians "undertake to purify those who come to them after various sins, with no fruit of penance, without recourse to the power of the priest, without going through the degrees set forth in the ecclesiastical canons, to the point that they even present some for clerical ordination before they are distant from their sins." He continues, "they actually loosened the ties imposed by priests and they teach to despise the excommunications" and whoever comes first "who has absolutely no priesthood can bless the chalice."

113. This suggests that "sacraments" like "hierarchy" might have a different meaning for Niketas than it does readers today. This is an area that still warrants further research, but it is clear that Niketas and Symeon both envision Eucharist as the sacrament, and confession almost as a nonliturgical sacrament, with sacrament being almost synonymous with hierarchy.

114. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 191.

115. Turner, notes to *Epistle I*, in *Epistles*, 67–9.

116. Ibid., 69.

117. Stethatos, *Life of Symeon*, 3.33 (Greenfield 73).

118. Ibid., 5–7 (Greenfield 131–249).

119. Turner, *Symeon*, 91–2.

120. This is particularly evident in Symeon, *Epistle I* (Turner 30–65).

121. Ibid., 55–57.

122. Stethatos, *Life of Symeon,* 5.63 (Greenfield 143).

123. Basile Markesinis, “Un extrait d’une lettre de Nicetas Stethatos a Philothee L’higoumine,” *La spiritualité de l’univers byzantine dans le verbe et l’image* (1997), 173–92.

124. Ibid. For the characterization of Stethatos as a canon expert, see Krausmüller, “Private vs. Communal,” 328.

125. Markesinis, “Un Extrait,” 173.

126. Stethatos, *On the Limits of Life,* 3.27–35 (*SC* 81, 390–99).

127. Ibid., 3.34 (*SC* 81, 399).

128. Golitzin, “Hierarchy Versus Anarchy,” 175. Golitzin observes that

> It is a clear, empirical fact that clerical office holders are not always, or even often holy men, I cannot believe that Dionysius did not know that. On the other hand, if we were to push the “charismatic” option to its limits, as Symeon almost does, then we would end up dissolving the visible structures of the Church quite entirely. The key, though, is that “almost.” Neither the New Theologian, nor his disciple (Niketas), nor Dionysius do push their logic to these limits. They are content with ambiguity.

129. See the priestly summon to the Eucharistic participants to partake of communion in the Orthodox Divine Liturgy (of both St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom).

4. Nicholas Cabasilas and Embodied Authority

1. For example, 1 Corinthians 12:12–26, Romans 12:3–5, and Ephesians 1:22–23.

2. Franz Tinnefeld, “Intellectuals in Late Byzantine Thessalonike,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 57 (2003): 153–72. Tinnefeld rightly observes on that a number of fourteenth-century intellectual families were from Thessaloniki including Cabasilas’s own and the Kydones, making it notably “honorable” in its philosophical and theological contributions (162).

3. Cabasilas, *Letter 20* found in Marie-Helene Congourdeau, *Correspondance de Nicolas Cabasilas* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2010), 115. English translations from this edition are my own. Congourdeau notes in the introduction to this letter, for example that Nicholas essentially admires the Patriarch’s eloquence as much as his orthodoxy. More on this characterization of Nicholas as a humanist and hesychast supporter can be found in Marcus Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 100–108. The characterization of Nicholas as a hesychast is not unanimous and an excellent summary of the relevant scholarship and evaluation of situating Nicholas among his contemporaries is Eugenia Russell, “Nicholas Cabasilas Chamaetos (c. 1322–90): A unique voice among

his contemporaries," *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 54 (2010): 122–24. The eloquence of Nicholas's own writings is also highlighted in Myrrha Lot-borodine, *Nicolas Cabasilas: Un maître de la spiritualité byzantine au XIV siècle* (Paris, Éditions de l'Orante, 1958).

4. See for example Cabasilas, *Letter 18* (Congourdeau 102–7); John Bekkos, "Cabasilas, the Divine Liturgy and Political Governance: A Polis as Liturgy," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 25 (2012): 405–17. Bekkos observes that "Cabasilas was a genuinely cosmopolitan intellectual of his era. He is an important figure not only because he was close to the fourteenth-century Byzantine Emperor John Catacuzenus (who reigned from 1347–54), but also because he was aware of the theological production, both past and present, of the Western Church. As one would expect, his sermons and writings are characterized by an openness that is not limited to the 'boundaries' of the Eastern Church" (406).

5. Antonio Garzya, "Un opuscule inédit de Nicolas Cabasilas," *Byzantion* 24 (1955): 521–32; Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas,* 105–6. Plested argues convincingly that the characterization of Nicholas as somehow anti-Palamite, is erroneous and based on a misrepresentation of the Palamite position as fundamentally antirational.

6. Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas,* 100–104. Plested provides further notes and discussion on Cabasilas's writings as reflective of themes from Aquinas, Anselm, Augustine, Aristotle, and the concept of Mary's Immaculate Conception.

7. Eugenia Russell, *St. Demetrius of Thessalonika: Cult and Devotion in the Middle Ages* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), 31. Constantine Tsirpanlis, "The Career and Writings of Nicolas Cabasilas," *Byzantion* 49 (1979): 414–27. Tsirpanlis is citing John Cantacuzenos, *Historiae*, L. IV found in *Patrologia Graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 154 (Paris: 1857–66), 418–20; M. Jugie, *Homélies mariales, byzantines II*, Patrologia Orientalis 19 (1925): 465–510. Jugie in his introduction to Cabasilas indicates that not much is known of Cabasilas; it is unclear if he was a priest or not at some point during his life, but we do know that in 1354 he was still among the laity and it is worth noting that lay theologians were not uncommon in Byzantium at that time (457). Russell suggests that Nicholas was in fact a lawyer. Tsirpanlis notes from Cantacuzene's own *Historiae* that "Nicolas was to be one of the 'two friends' who were to accompany the emperor because of their very great wisdom and chastity in the unmarried state," and observes that the *Historiae* "characterizes Nicolas Cabasilas as one of the most prominent members of the Byzantine Church clergy."

8. For a more detailed account of the Zealot Controversy, see John Barker, "Late Byzantine Thessalonike: A Second City's Challenges and Responses," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 57 (2003): 5–33.

9. Ioannis Polemis, "Notes on a Short Treatise by Nicolas Cabasilas," *Revue des études byzantines* 51 (1993): 155–60; here, 158. Polemis summarizes that theo-

rization on the relationship between Palamas and Cabasilas "ranges from pure rejection to trying to express the same views in a different key."

10. John Meyendorff, "Is 'Hesychasm' the Right Word? Remarks on Religious Ideology in the Fourteenth Century," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 7 (1983): 447–57.

11. Barker, "Late Byzantine Thessalonike," 16–21; Ernest Barker, "The Social Revolutionary Movement of the Zealots of Thessalonica (circa 1342–50)," in *Social and Political Thought in Byzantium* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 184–90.

12. For an overview of Palamas, see John Meyendorff, *A Study of Gregory Palamas* (Crestwood, N.Y.: Saint Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974).

13. There is theological agreement even if Cabasilas disagrees with Palamas in regards to secular education as is suggested by Polemis "Notes on a short treatise," 159. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1979), 108. Meyendorff makes a strong claim in this regard saying "What Palamas rendered in terms of concepts, Cabasilas expressed as an existential reality not only for Hesychast monks but also for every Christian. To understand the theological achievement of fourteenth-century Byzantium, it is essential to read Palamas and Cabasilas together."

14. Tsirpanlis, "Career and Writings," 426 cites and offers a translation of Myrrha Lot-Borodine, *Nicolas Cabasilas: Un maître de la spiritualité byzantine au XIV siècle* (Éditions de l'Orante, 1958), 2. Lot-Borodine, rightly notes this Christocentricism of Cabasilas's theological works explaining that, "Both these principal treatises of Cabasilas, although differentiated as to their subject, reveal and identical inspiration: the glorification of the mystery of our salvation grafted on the living Person of the Redeemer."

15. Polemis, "Notes on a Short Treatise," 158. Polemis summarizes this interpretation of Cabasilas as representing a different side of a shared theological reality noting that, "Meyendorff, and some theologians (Bobrinskoy and Nellas) maintain the view that Cabasilas, far from disagreeing with Palamas, tried to express the ascetic doctrines of the latter in a somewhat different way."

16. Robert Taft, *Liturgy in Byzantium and Beyond* (Aldershot, U.K.: Variorum, 1995), 45–46.

17. Hugh Wybrew, *The Orthodox Liturgy* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990), 145.

18. Ibid., 147.

19. Ibid., 154; Warren Woodfin, *The Embodied Icon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

20. Wybrew, *The Orthodox Liturgy*, 153.

21. Ibid., 158. Germanus of Constantinople, *On the Divine Liturgy*, trans. Paul Meyendorff (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984).

22. Wybrew, *The Orthodox Liturgy,* 163. Salaville highlights for example the importance of the words of the epiklesis, for the Council of Trent in the introduction to Cabasilas's *Explication de la divine liturgie,* ed. R. Bornert, J. Gouillard, P. Périchon, and S. Salaville, *Sources Chrétiennes* 4 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1967), 13–16.

23. Thalia Gouma-Peterson, "Christ as Ministrant and the Priest as Ministrant of Christ in a Palaeologan Program of 1303," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 32 (1978): 199. Gouma-Peterson notes that it was during this same period that the iconographic program the church shifted to respond to the same issue by depicting Christ as the ultimate priest and the ultimate priest as Christ.

24. Nicholas Denysenko, "*The Life in Christ* by Nicholas Cabasilas as a Mystagogical Work," *Studia Liturgica* 38 (2009): 242–60. Denysenko terms this process as "christifiation" which highlights the christological orientation and foci of Cabasilas's hierarchical theology.

25. Thalia Gouma-Peterson, "Christ as Ministrant," 214. Gouma-Peterson notes that the "sacramental realism and mysticism of Palamas and Nicholas Cabasilas, which are based on the belief that God is present in the church neither symbolically nor subjectively, but in all reality, and that Christian spirituality, like every other Christian religious act, must reflect this [divine] objective Presence" (214).

26. For example, see Nicholas Cabasilas, *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, trans. Joan Mervyn Hussey and P. A. McNulty (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2002), 55. Hereafter, this translation is referenced by the page number in Hussey in parenthesis following the section number of the original text.

27. Ibid., III.29–30 (Hussey 71–79). Cabasilas cites Dionysius as an authoritative witness to his own theological and liturgical interpretation, for example calling him the "great," "most holy," and "blessed" Dionysius.

28. Cabasilas, *The Life in Christ*, V.2, trans. Carmino J. de Catanzaro (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974), 150. Hereafter referred to parenthetically by the translator followed by the page number.

29. Schmemann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1986), 205. Schmemann's observation that from "the Areopagite down to Cabasilas we see the elaboration of one and the same theology," although overgeneralized does rightly acknowledge Dionysius and Cabasilas as are reflective of a liturgical theological tradition in which there is significant continuity between longitudinally diverse authors.

30. Constantine Tsirpanlis, *The Liturgical and Mystical Theology of Nicholas Cabasilas* (New York: Eastern Orthodox Press, 1986), 94–95.

31. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, I.3 in *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, ed. Colm Luibhéid and Paul Rorem (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 198.

Hereafter, abbreviated citations will be given with reference to Dionysius, the text, and the section followed by Luibhéid and the page numbers in this edition in parenthesis.

32. Bekkos, "Cabasilas, the Divine Liturgy," 410. Bekkos summarizes that for Cabasilas "what happened in the incarnation of God, and what happens in every Liturgy, is the annihilation of the distance between God and man, which is part of what it means to say that Christ shared human nature."

33. Cabasilas, *The Life in Christ*, II.1 (deCatanzaro 66).

34. Ibid.

35. Cf. Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*, trans. John Behr (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2012).

36. Bogdan, Bucur, "Foreordained from All Eternity: The Mystery of the Incarnation According to Some Early Christian and Byzantine Writers." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 62 (2008): 199–215. Bucur, notes that "A crucial implication of Cabasilas's christomorphic anthropology is the crucial fact that the Incarnation of the Logos appears as the original destiny of mankind . . . such a life is rooted in God's outpouring in to the world as a fragrant Myron that imparts incorruption" (208).

37. Andrew Louth, *Denys the Areopagite* (Wilton, Conn.: Morehouse-Barlow, 1989), 124. "Ascent" in Dionysius is arguably more an interior transcendence of one's hierarchic reality and situation in relation to others rather than a progression through the ranks (it is not necessary to be a hierarch to be divinized).

38. For a discussion on the classic comparison between Cabasilas and Anselm, see S. Salaville, "Vues sotériologiques chez Nicholas Cabasilas," *Revue de Etudes Byzantines* I (1943): 5–57.

39. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ*, II.1 (deCatanzaro 63).

40. Compare with Colossians 1:18 where Christ's headship over the ecclesiastical body is explained in terms of order and rank as the means of union.

41. Boris Bobrinskoy, introduction to *Life in Christ* (deCatanzaro 28).

42. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ*, II.10 (deCatanzaro 83).

43. Ibid., II.14 (deCatanzaro 88).

44. Bekkos, "Cabasilas, the Divine Liturgy," 416. Bekkos commenting on this passage emphasizes the communal responsibility of the hierarchy because "church governance is linked to the life of Christ."

45. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ*, II.14 (deCatanzaro 88).

46. Cited and translated in Robert Taft, "The Living Icon: Touching the Transcendent in Palaiologan Iconography and Liturgy," in *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557)*, ed. Sarah Brooks (New York: Yale University Press, 2006), 55.

47. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ,* II.12 (deCatanzaro 86); Woodfin, *Embodied Icon*, 207. Woodfin offers insight on this point from the historical development of vestments, explaining:

> The ecclesiastical hierarchy, lacking a single earthly head, expressed its direct dependence on Christ. By placing Christ on their garments and head gear in a way analogous to the use of the imperial image on the costume of courtiers, Byzantine prelates expressed the continuity of their own hierarchy on earth with the hierarchy of heaven. Late Byzantine liturgical vestments revealed the hidden unity of the Church on earth and in heaven, a unity more perfectly, if less visibly manifested in the Eucharist itself.

48. See Bekkos, "Cabasilas, the Divine Liturgy," 413–17 for a more detailed discussion of the "lack."

49. Tsirpanlis, "The Liturgical and Mystical," 48 explains in the context of the sacrament of confirmation that for Cabasilas "synergism is absolutely necessary since without it the Sacrament itself remains uneffective. Cabasilas recalls St. Paul, who urged Christians to be careful against the danger of neglecting the received grace."

50. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ*, IV.11 (deCatanzaro 132).

51. Tsirpanlis, "The Liturgical and Mystical," 18.

52. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ*, IV.8 (deCatanzaro 125).

53. Ibid., *Commentary*, III.24 (Hussey 65). Describing the "Great Entrance" Cabasilas explains that "this ceremony signifies the last manifestation of Christ" in which "we must prostrate ourselves before the priest and entreat him to remember us in the priest and entreat him to remember us in the prayers which he is about to say. For there is no other means of supplication so powerful, so certain of acceptance, as that which takes place through this most holy sacrifice, which has freely cleansed us of our sins and iniquities."

54. Taft, "Living Icon," 54.

55. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ*, II.15 (deCatanzaro 225).

56. Deno J. Geanakoplos, "Church and State in the Byzantine Empire: A Reconsideration of The Problem of Caesaropapism," *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture* 34 (1965): 381–403.

57. Nicholas Cabasilas, *Discourse Concerning Illegal Acts of Officials Daringly Committed against Things Sacred*, found in "Nicolas Cabasilas' 'Anti-Zealot' Discourse: A Reinterpretation," ed. Ihor Ševčenko. *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 11 (1957): 79–171; here, 107. Hereafter cited with the Discourse number followed by Ševčenko's page number in parenthesis.

58. Bekkos, "Cabasilas, the Divine Liturgy," 275. Bekkos rightly points to the resourcefulness of Cabasilas's model for political leadership and governance, because it requires sacrifice on behalf of the leadership, which is christologically reflective.

59. Dionysius, *Epistle VIII* (Luibhéid 275).

60. Cabasilas, *Commentary*, III.27 (Hussey 69).

61. Ibid., III.28 (Hussey 71).

62. Ibid., III.29 (Hussey 76).

63. Ibid.

64. Taft, "Living Icon," 54–5.

65. Cabasilas, *Commentary*, III.29 (Hussey 74).

66. For additional secondary discussion of this point, see Tsirpanlis, "The Liturgical and Mystical," 13, 25, and 53.

67. Louth, "Reception of Dionysius," 597. Louth notes that

> evidence of a broader, less polemical, influence of the Areopagite is found in hesychast circles in the writings of the supporter of Palamas, Nicholas Cabasilas, concerned with the Divine Liturgy. Both in his *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, and even more evidently in his *Life in Christ*, which takes its understanding of the threefold nature of the "Mysteries," as Baptism, Chrismation and the Eucharist, more or less directly from the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, there is clear evidence that Dionysius's understanding of the sacramental nature of the Christian life was still influential in the Byzantine world.

68. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 191.

69. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ,* I.1 (deCatanzaro 44).

70. Ibid., I.2 (deCatanzaro 46).

71. Bobrinskoy, introduction to *Life in Christ* (deCatanzaro 23, 33). Bobrinskoy explains that "union with Christ according to Cabasilas must be understood in the most literal and realistic manner," and that for Cabasilas "pure prayer cannot . . . be separated from participation in the sacramental life of the Church."

72. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ,* I.5–6 (deCatanzaro 49–50).

73. John 14:6.

74. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ*, I.5 (deCatanzaro 49).

75. Tsirpanlis, "The Liturgical and Mystical," 20. Tsirpanlis aptly explains: "Ritual symbolism is more than a representation addressed to the senses in order to remind us of spiritual realities. The word 'anamnesis' does not mean only commemoration; rather it denotes an imitation into a mystery, the revelation of a reality which is always present in the Church."

76. Cabasilas, *Commentary*, IV.38 (Hussey 91).

77. Pekka Metso, "Divine Presence in the Eucharistic Theology of Nicholas Cabasilas," (PhD diss., University of Eastern Finland, 2010), 76. Thus, Metso rightly observes that "Cabasilas's description indicates that in the liturgy the sanctifying effects of Christ's kenosis become spiritually adoptable."

78. Metso, "Divine Presence," 66.

79. Denysenko, "*The Life in Christ*," 247. Denysenko explains that for Cabasilas "while Christ is the active agent in Cabasilas's scheme, the one who infuses

and endows, humans are not completely passive instruments who simply enact predetermined events from God's plan. . . . [H]umans have the power to exercise their free choice, though any variance with God's will manifested by disorder in this life deprives them of this gift."

80. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ*, I.6 (deCatanzaro 52).

81. Ibid., *Commentary*, III.28 (Hussey 71).

82. Ibid., *Life in Christ*, II.3 (deCatanzaro 70).

83. Tsirpanlis, "The Liturgical and Mystical," 15 explains that "all the actions of the officiating bishop ritually identified with Christ Himself, the hierarchic representative of the whole humanity, have no other purpose than to establish the house of prayer, the temple of God . . . and to transform a stone into an altar. . . . In order to succeed in this task 'that exceeds the natural forces,' the bishop should strive to achieve within him the same metamorphosis; he should collect his thoughts to 'introduce God into his soul and make his own heart an altar.'"

84. Cabasilas, *Commentary*, I.6 (Hussey 34).

85. Ibid., *Life in Christ*, VI.14 (deCatanzaro 194).

86. Ibid., *Commentary,* I.6 (Hussey 35).

87. Schmemann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 128–9.

88. Cabasilas, *Commentary* (Hussey 51).

89. For more on the dissimilar similarity in Dionysius, see Charles Stang, *Apophasis and Pseudonymity in Dionysius the Areopagite: "No longer I"* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 31–5.

90. Cabasilas, "Explanation of the Sacred Ornaments" in Nicholas Cabasilas, *Explication de la divine liturgie*, ed. Severien Salaville (Paris: Les Editions Du Cerf, 1967): 365–67.

91. Ibid., *Commentary*, I.1 (Hussey 26).

92. Ibid., II.16 (Hussey 53).

93. Taft, "Living Icon," 57.

94. Ibid., II.23 (Hussey 63).

95. Ibid., II.16 (Hussey 52).

96. Bekkos, "Cabasilas," 408.

97. Cabasilas, *Commentary*, III.30 (Hussey 78).

98. Tsirpanlis, "The Liturgical and Mystical," 13. Additionally, as Tsirpanlis observes, Cabasilas was "familiar with the view of St. John Chrysostom and like him, he insists that Christ is the Consecrator and High Priest of every offering," so that "no sin of the priest at the altar can mar the efficacy of the sacrificial offering."

99. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ,* V.6 (deCatanzaro 156).

100. Ibid., *Commentary*, III.36 (Hussey 89).

101. Bekkos, "Cabasilas, the Divine Liturgy," 411 notes that for Cabasilas "neither knowing nor ignorance can heal what is 'broken' given that only God, through the Divine Liturgy, is in the position to heal, while politicians and clergy always live in a 'broken' or 'limited' state."

102. Cabasilas, *Commentary*, V.46 (Hussey 102–3).

103. Ibid., V.46 (Hussey 103).

104. Ibid. (Hussey 104).

105. Ibid. (Hussey 105).

106. For example, Canon XIV in the "Canons of the Holy Apostles" and "Canon 1" in the "Council of Sardica" (Nicodemus and Agapius, *The Rudder of the Orthodox Catholic Church: The Compilation of the Holy Canons*, trans. D. Cummings [Brookfield, Mass.: The Orthodox Christian Educational Society, 1957], 25 and 579).

107. Cabasilas, *Discourse*, 40 (Ševčenko 116).

108. Ibid., 54 (Ševčenko 122).

109. Ibid., 56 (Ševčenko 124–25).

110. Ibid., 57 (Ševčenko 125).

111. Ibid.

112. Ševčenko "Nicolas," 57. Ševčenko paraphrases Cabasilas in this section, saying:

> Who is the defendant to defy these three authorities? He is superior to others only insofar as he appears as the imitator of Christ and the continuator of the way laid down by the apostles and their successors. Once he is shown to move in the opposite direction, of what use is he to his flock? What can he invoke in defense of his behavior and in support of his rule? The priesthood? But he has violated its laws. His retinue? But his rule is of another kind. He has but two choices—either to surround himself with soldiers and to rule by force, or to resign as unworthy to govern his subjects.

113. Cabasilas, *Discourse*, 47 (Ševčenko 119).

114. Tsirpanlis, "The Liturgical and Mystical," 29 explains regarding the priest in Cabasilas that "Being our mystagogus, moralist, and preacher, he is thus also shown as a pragmatist, in the pure sense of the word, with a true religious conscience based on personal experience; *pragma* (act, reality) and particularly *peira* (experience) are the expressions frequently used by Cabasilas with all their existential value."

115. Cabasilas, *Discourse*, 48 (Ševčenko 119).

116. Ibid., 25 (Ševčenko 103–4).

117. Ibid.

118. Bekkos, "Cabasilas," 413.

119. Cabasilas, *Discourse*, 58 (Ševčenko 124–25). Cf. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology,* 207: "The bishop, or the priest—are individually nothing more than sinners whose prayers are not necessarily heard, but when gathered together in the name of Christ, as the 'Church of God,' they take part in the New Testament, to which God has eternally committed Himself through his Son and his Spirit."

120. Russell, "Nicholas Cabasilas," 122.

121. See Cabasilas, *Letters 3 & 5* (Congourdeau 11–15, 23–27).

5. Thearchical Power in Theory and Practice

1. For Dionysius, bringing about divine likeness is the primary purpose God has given humanity the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy,* 1.3, referenced from the translated edition, *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, ed. Colm Luibhéid and Paul Rorem (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 198. Hereafter, abbreviated citations will be given with reference to Dionysius, the text, and the section followed by Luibhéid and the page numbers in this edition in parenthesis. Condescension of the hierarch as a divine reflection is highlighted in Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy,* 2.1 (Luibhéid 201).

2. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 1.3 (Luibhéid 198).

3. For example, Dionysius, *Celestial Hierarchy*, 13.4 (Luibhéid 179). Dionysius specifies that "the Deity surpasses every visible and invisible power in a total excess of transcendence. It is completely set apart from everything. It is unlike even the foremost of beings. It is the Cause and the source of being for every entity. It is the unchanging basis of the stability of everything and is for even the most exalted powers, the author of being and indeed of well-being" (179).

4. Dionysius, *Divine Names,* 10.1 (Luibhéid 119). Dionysius explains regarding calling God omnipotent "The first of these names is given because as the omnipotent foundation of everything he preserves and embraces all the world. He founds it. He makes it secure. He holds it together. He binds the whole universe totally to himself. He generates everything from out of himself as from some omnipotent root and he returns all things back to himself as though to some omnipotent storehouse. Being their omnipotent foundation, he holds them all together."

5. Maximus, *Chapters on Knowledge*, I, in *Maximus Confessor: Selected Writings*, trans. George Berthold (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 129. Hereafter, this edition is referenced parenthetically by the translator followed by the page number.

6. Ibid., *Commentary on the Our Father* (Berthold 110).

7. Cabasilas, *Commentary,* V.46 found in Nicholas Cabasilas, *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, trans. Joan Mervyn Hussey and P. A. McNulty (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2002), 104–5. Hereafter, this transla-

tion is referenced by the page number in Hussey in parenthesis following the section number of the original text.

8. See, for example, Maximus, *Opuscule 6*, found in *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*, trans. Paul Blowers and Robert Wilken (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 127–30. Hereafter, this edition is referred to by citing the translators.

9. Dionysius, *Divine Names,* 4.29, 8.3 (Luibhéid 93, 111).

10. Ibid., *Divine Names,* 10.1 (Luibhéid 120).

11. Maximus, *Chapters on Knowledge* (Berthold 153).

12. Stethatos, *On the Practice of the Virtues* in Stethatos, *Centuries of Practical and Gnostic Chapters*, ed. G. Palmer, P. Sherrard, and K. Ware (London: Faber and Faber, 1995), 100. Hereafter, this edition is cited by parenthetical reference to the editors followed by the page number.

13. Cabasilas, *The Life in Christ*, trans. Carmino J. de Catanzaro (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974), 165. Hereafter, this translation is referred to parenthetically by the translator followed by the page number.

14. Maximus, *The Ascetic Life*, trans. Polycarp Sherwood (Mahwah, N.J.: Newman Press, 1955), 111. Texts from this edition are hereafter parenthetically cited with reference to the translator followed by the page number.

15. Stethatos, *On Spiritual Knowledge*, 6 (Palmer 140).

16. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ*, VI.3 (deCatanzaro 163–64).

17. Ibid., *Commentary*, II.15 (Hussey 51).

18. Stethatos, *On the Inner Nature of Things*, 4 (Palmer 76).

19. Niketas Stethatos, *The Life of Saint Symeon the New Theologian*, trans. Richard P. H. Greenfield (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013), 133. Hereafter, this translation is cited parenthetically with reference to the translator.

20. Cabasilas, *Commentary*, II.12 (Hussey 43).

21. For the relation between singing and building of the "self," see Derek Krueger, *Liturgical Subjects: Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative, and the Formation of the Self in Byzantium* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).

22. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ*, IV.1, VI.8 (deCatanzaro 144, 172–73).

23. Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*, trans. John Behr (Crestwood, N.Y.: St Vladimir's Press, 2012); Gen. 1:27; Cabasilas, *Life in Christ*, IV.6 (deCatanzaro 122–23); Maximus, *The Ascetic Life*, 43 (Sherwood 134).

24. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 1.5 (Luibhéid 199).

25. Niketas Stethatos, *Opuscules et lettres*, ed. J. Darrouzés, *Sources Chrétiennes* 81 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1961), 330–35. Hereafter, this edition will be cited as "*SC* 81" followed by the page number. All translations from this edition

are my own. Stethatos makes the parallel between heaven and earth in the hierarchies the most explicit.

26. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 5.5–6 (Luibhéid 236–37).

27. Ignatius of Antioch, *Epistle to the Smyrnaeans*, trans. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson in the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, N.Y.: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885).

28. Cabasilas, *Commentary*, III.29 (Hussey 76).

29. This type of mutual stratified service is reflected in the description of hierarchy as a harmonious choir in Stethatos, *On Hierarchy,* 23 (*SC* 81, 228–29).

30. Maximus, *Difficulty* 41, in Andrew Louth, *Maximus the Confessor* (London: Routledge, 1996), 155–62. Louth titles his translation of Maximus's text with the English "Difficulty" in lieu of "Ambiguum" as it is cited in other translated editions such as Blowers and Wilken, and Maximos the Confessor, *On Difficulties in the Church Fathers: The Ambigua*, vol. 2, trans. Nicholas Constas (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2014), 102–21. See, also, *The Church's Mystagogy*, I (Berthold 187).

31. Cabasilas, *Commentary*.

32. The descriptions of these interactions are particularly evident in Dionysius's *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*. This is especially the case if we indeed take seriously the liturgically scripted actions as having efficacious significance beyond the mere symbolic. See Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory*.

33. See Isaiah 44:6, 48:12; Rev. 1:8, 22:13; John 13:1–17; Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy,* I (Luibhéid 196).

34. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 2.1 (Luibhéid 200).

35. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ* is particularly noteworthy in this regard.

36. See the numerous descriptions in Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*; Maximus, *The Church's Mystagogy*; Stethatos, *On Hierarchy*; and Cabasilas, *Life in Christ*.

37. Cabasilas, *Commentary,* V.46 (Hussey 104–5).

38. Ibid.

39. These interactions to varying degrees are described in the liturgical descriptions in Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*; Maximus, *Mystagogy*; Stethatos, *On Hierarchy*; and Cabasilas, *Commentary*.

40. Derek Krueger, *Liturgical Subjects*.

41. The connection between teaching and maintaining values through rituals is highlighted in Ronald Grimes, *The Craft of Ritual Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 312, 323.

42. See, for example, Dionysius, *Mystical Theology* (Luibhéid 135–41); Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*. Moreover, contrast for example the creedal assertions of belief in the "almighty" and the one who was "crucified." Athanasius takes particular delight in the descent of God.

43. Cabasilas, *Commentary*, II.13 (deCatanzaro 47); Robert Taft, *The Byzantine Rite: A Short History* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1992).

44. The hymns of Romanos the Melodist are ripe with these celebrations of condescension, see for example the collection of hymns in Romanos, *Kontakia: On the Life of Christ*, trans. Ephrem Lash (San Francisco, Calif.: Harper Collins, 1998). Contemporary Orthodox hymns that developed during the Byzantine period likewise reflect the celebration of the paradox of power through condescension. See the fifteenth antiphon of the service of the twelve passion Gospel readings in *The Lenten Triodion*, trans. Mother Mary and Kallistos Ware (South Canaan, Penn.: St. Tikhon's Seminary Press, 2002), 587.

45. Dionysius, *Celestial Hierarchy*, 13.3 (Luibhéid 178); Maximus, *Mystagogy*, XXIV (Berthold 208). Dionysius emphasizes that God is the source of "all visible and invisible order and harmony," and Maximus likewise explains that "the holy church . . . is the figure and image of God inasmuch as through it he effects in his infinite power and wisdom an unconfused unity."

46. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, I.3 (Luibhéid 198).

47. Nicholas Cabasilas, *Discourse Concerning Illegal Acts of Officials Daringly Committed against Things Sacred*, found in "Nicolas Cabasilas' 'Anti-Zealot' Discourse: A Reinterpretation," ed. Ihor Ševčenko. *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 11 (1957): 79–171; here, 122. Hereafter cited with the Discourse number followed by Ševčenko's page number in parenthesis.

48. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* II.2 (Luibhéid 200).

49. Cabasilas, *Commentary*, IV.36 (Hussey 88–89).

50. Stethatos, *On Hierarchy*, 13 (*SC* 81, 316–17).

51. For example, Christ's own humility and obedience are lauded in Cabasilas, *Life in Christ*, VI.3–4 (Hussey 184–85).

52. Stethatos, *On the Inner Nature of Things*, 43 (Palmer 118).

53. Stethatos, *Life of Symeon*, 30 (Greenfield 43).

54. Cabasilas, *Discourse*, 58 (Ševčenko 124–25).

55. Matthew 28:18.

56. See, for example, Maximus, *Ambiguum 42* (Blowers and Wilken 92). Maximus explains that the "principles" of every created "natures have enjoyed perfection in God simultaneous with their very existence, and their creation and substantiation are thoroughly incapable of admitting any addition to, or subtraction from, what the nature is in itself."

57. See, for example, Dionysius, *Epistle VIII* (Luibhéid 276). Dionysius explains here "Let the hierarchs bow to the apostles and to the successors of the apostles. And should one of these last [the hierarchs] fail in his duty then let him be set right by his peers. In this way no order will be disturbed and each person will remain in his own order and in his own ministry."

58. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 6.3 (Luibhéid 244–45).

59. Cabasilas, *Commentary,* V.48 (Hussey 107).
60. Ibid., *Discourse*, 58 (Ševčenko 124–25).
61. For example, Dionysius, *Epistle VIII*.2 (Luibhéid 275).
62. Maximus, *Letter 2* (Louth 87–88).
63. Ibid., *Commentary on the Our Father* (Berthold 101).
64. Cabasilas, *Discourse*, 56 (Ševčenko 124–25).
65. Ibid., *Life in Christ*, VII.10 (deCatanzaro 212–15).
66. Cf. Ibid., *Commentary*, III.28 (Hussey 71).
67. Ibid.
68. *The Trial of Maximus* (Berthold 17–31).
69. See, Dionysius, *Divine Names*, 4.20–32 (Luibhéid 86–94).
70. Cabasilas, *Discourse*, 25 (Ševčenko 103–4).
71. See for example, Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 2.2 (Luibhéid 201).
72. Dionysius makes this apparent in his rebuke of Demophilus in his *Epistle VIII* (Luibhéid 269–80).
73. Maximus, *Opuscule 6* (Blowers 173–76).
74. Stethatos, *Life of Symeon*, 66 (Greenfield 151).
75. Dionysius, *Epistle VIII* (Luibhéid 272).
76. Stethatos, *Life of Symeon,* 113 (Greenfield 261–62). Stethatos describes Symeon's response to his exile in this way saying "since he (Symeon) was like the apostles and an imitator of Christ, when he was abused he did not return the abuse, when he suffered he uttered no threats, when he was persecuted he endured, when he was slandered he encouraged his slanderers, and he rejoiced with unutterable joy in his tribulations, for he saw himself fulfilling Christ's beatitudes."
77. This attitude is displayed with the rousing speech to compunction in Maximus, *The Ascetic Life* 25–39 (Sherwood 117–29).
78. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ*, VI.3 (deCatanzaro 163).
79. Maximus, *The Ascetic Life*, 43 (Sherwood 134).
80. Maximus, *Ambiguum 7* (Blowers and Wilken 51).
81. Ibid.
82. Ibid. (Blowers and Wilken 52).
83. Maximus, *Ambiguum 42* (Blowers and Wilken 93).
84. Cabasilas, *Discourse*, 48 (Ševčenko 119).
85. Stethatos, *On Spiritual Knowledge,* 8 (Palmer 141).
86. Ibid., *Life of Symeon* 7.96 (Greenfield 223).
87. Stethatos negotiates this as a hagiographical trope in his *Life of Symeon* where the injustice Symeon suffers is framed as feeling injustice on behalf of another instead of himself and reframed through Symeon's perception of exile so that he was "filled with every delight" (Greenfield 223).

88. The hagiographical examples of Theodora of Arta, Matrona, Thomais of Lesbos, and Maria the Younger, can be found in Alice-Mary Talbot, *Holy Women of Byzantium* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1996).

89. Maximus, *Mystagogy*, XXIV (Berthold 212).

90. Maximus the Confessor emphasizes the likeness to God must be a "voluntary likeness" in his *Chapters on Knowledge*, I.13 (Berthold 131).

91. For example, Stethatos's *On Hierarchy*.

92. *The Trial of Maximus* (Berthold 17–31).

93. See Stethatos, *The Life of Symeon*. The measure of his success as being powerful in the Orthodox tradition is evident from his inclusion in *The Philokalia*, compiled by Nikodimos the Hagiorite and Makarios of Corinth, trans. Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware (London: Faber and Faber, 1995).

94. Krueger, *Writing and Holiness: The Practice of Early Christian Authorship* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 9. Krueger points out that the authority of authorship the legitimacy of the power of writing depended on a posture of humility and obedience and location of ultimate power not with oneself but with God.

95. Stethatos, *On the Inner Nature of Things,* 33 (Palmer 115–16).

96. 1 Cor. 3:9.

97. Michel Foucault, "Afterword: The Subject and Power," in *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 224.

98. Ibid., "The Confession of the Flesh," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 199.

99. Taken from the opening prayer "O Heavenly King" that opens most liturgical services of the Orthodox Church and refers to the Holy Spirit.

100. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), 194.

101. Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1970), 56. Arendt distinguishes between power and violence based on terms of "numbers" and "implements," rather than moral or ethical claims.

102. Judith Butler, Jürgen Habermas, and Charles Taylor, *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 112, 113, 72. Butler, for example, poses the question: "I wonder whether the residues of the theological continue to resonate within what we understand as secular."

103. Foucault, "Afterword: The Subject and Power," 214.

104. Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theatre Journal* 40, no. 4 (1998): 524.

105. Ibid., *The Psychic Life of Power* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997), 15. Butler explains the complex temporal dynamic of power as preceding the subject and yet being brought to effect later by subjects, saying "power is both external to the subject and the very venue of the subject."

106. Jeffrey Nealon, *Foucault beyond Foucault: Power and Its Intensifications since 1984* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2008), 24.

107. Dionysius, *Divine Names,* 8.2 (Luibhéid 110).

108. John Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1975), 82; Eric Perl, *Theophany* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008); Peter Norton, *Episcopal Elections 250–600* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

109. Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy,* I.4 (Luibhéid 198).

Conclusion

1. Yordan Kalev Zhekov, *The Rise of Hierarchical Leadership* (Osijek, Croatia: Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2005), 39.

2. See J. S. Custer, "Priesthood's Pledge: Eucharist and Tradition in the Byzantine Rite of Ordination," *Gregorianum* 88 (2007): 373–86; Evangelos Theodorou, "Das Priestertum nach dem Zeugnis der byzantinischen liturgischen Texte," *Ökumenische Rundschau* (1986): 267–80.

3. See *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles Commonly Called the Didache*, ed. by Cyril C. Richardson (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1970), 178.

4. For example, *The Didascalia Apostolorum,* trans. Alistair Stewart-Sykes (Belgium: Brepols Publishers, 2009).

5. Ignatius of Antioch, *Epistle to the Smyrnaeans*, trans. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson in the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, N.Y.: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885).

6. See the helpful survey of "hierarchy" in early Christianity presented in Zhekov, *Rise of Hierarchical,* 17–30.

7. George, Dennis, "The Priesthood in Ecclesiastical Literature of the First Five Centuries," *Church History* 61 (1992): 235–36.

8. See, for example, the ecclesiastical arrangement presented throughout *The Didascalia Apostolorum*.

9. *Neoplatonism and Christian Thought*, vol. 2, ed. Dominic O'Meara (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982), 3–53.

10. Sarah Klitenic Wear and John M. Dillon, *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist Tradition: Despoiling the Hellenes* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2007), 33–50.

11. One notable example in modern Orthodox scholarship is John Zizioulas, *Eucharist, Bishop, Church: The Unity of the Church in the Divine Eucharist and the*

Bishop During the First Three Centuries (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2001).

12. Nicodemus and Agapius, *The Rudder of the Orthodox Catholic Church: The Compilation of the Holy Canons*, trans. D. Cummings (Brookfield, Mass.: The Orthodox Christian Educational Society, 1957).

13. Paul Bradshaw, *Ordination Rites of East and West* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1990).

14. This dynamic will be discussed more in the next section with reference to the popular hagiography of Mary of Egypt.

15. Silouan the Athonite, "Concerning Shepherds of Souls," in *St. Silouan the Athonite* ed. Archmandrite Sophrony, trans. Romsemary Edmonds (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1991), 399–406.

16. Canon XXVIII of the Council of Chalcedon (Nicodemus and Agapius, *Rudder* 271).

17. For example, see the state of overlapping Orthodox jurisdictional episcopacies in the United States. The official website of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America accessed April 28, 2014, http://www.assemblyofbishops.org/about/, states:

> The Assembly has been established in accordance with the Decision of the 4th Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference, convoked in Chambésy, Switzerland, June 6–12, 2009, at which met representatives from all the universally-recognized autocephalous Orthodox churches. These representatives recognized substantial canonical "anomalies" in the organization and life of the Church in these regions, and realized that, though these anomalies had arisen from specific historical circumstances and pastoral needs, they nonetheless present a number of serious problems for the faithful; moreover, they give an appearance of disunity in the one holy Church. As such, these representatives unanimously agreed to the formation of the assemblies of bishops to heal, as quickly as possible, these anomalies.

18. See the text of the *Cherubikon*, trans. Egon Wellesz, in Wellesz, *A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), 166.

19. Leonie Liveris, "Authority in the Church as the Body of Christ," *The Ecumenical Review* 60 (2008): 112, 113.

20. "Chapter 3: The Life of Mary of Egypt," trans. Maria Kouli in *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints Lives in English Translation*, ed. Alice-Mary Talbot (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1996), 65–94; here, 78.

21. Efthalia Makris Walsh, "The Ascetic Mother Mary of Egypt," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 34, no. 1 (1989): 59–69.

22. Ibid.

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